MARVEL KNIGHTS

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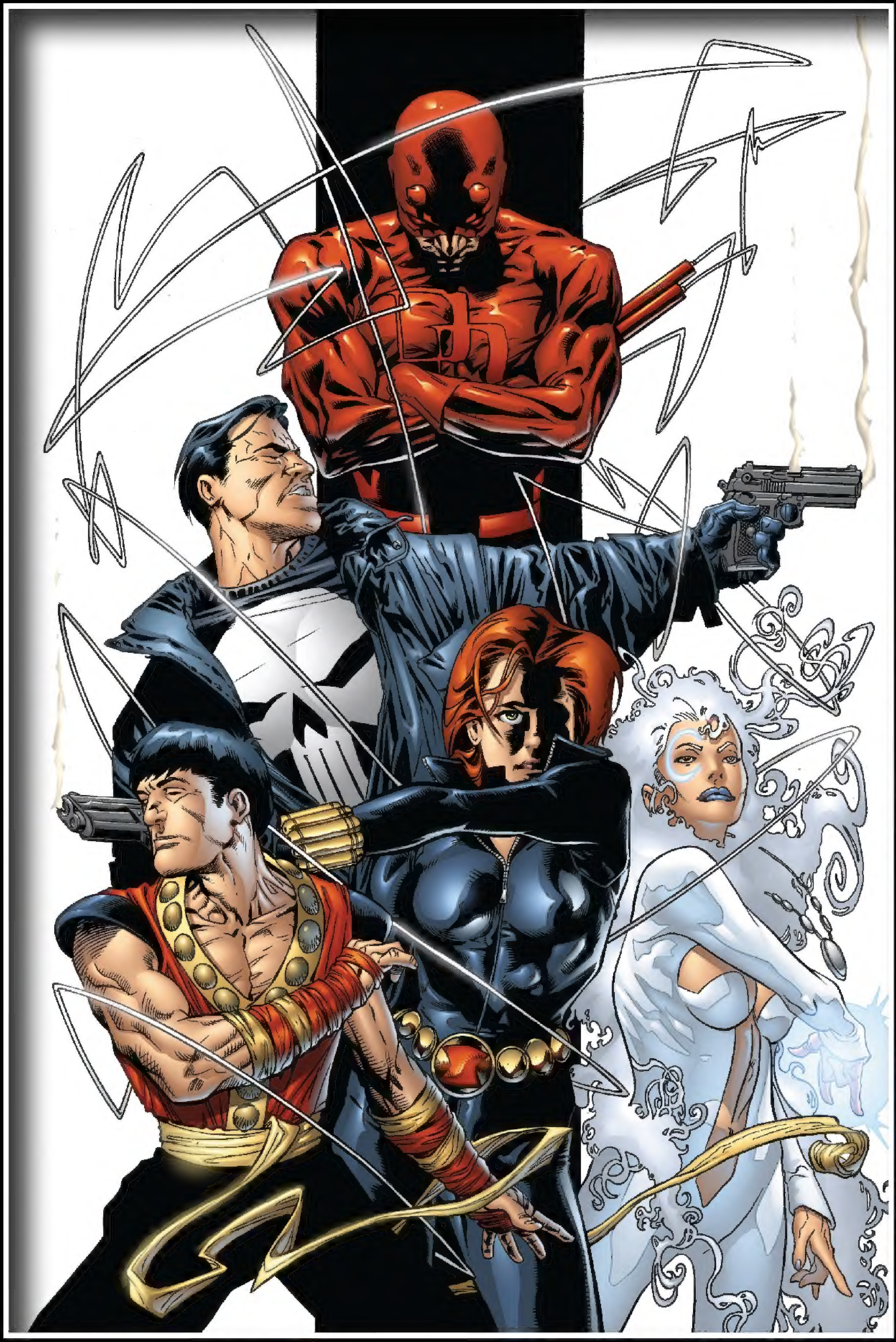
## DEFENDERS OF THE STREETS



CHUCK DIXON • EDUARDO BARRETO
KLAUS JANSON • NELSON DeCASTRO • DAVE KEMP

MARVEL

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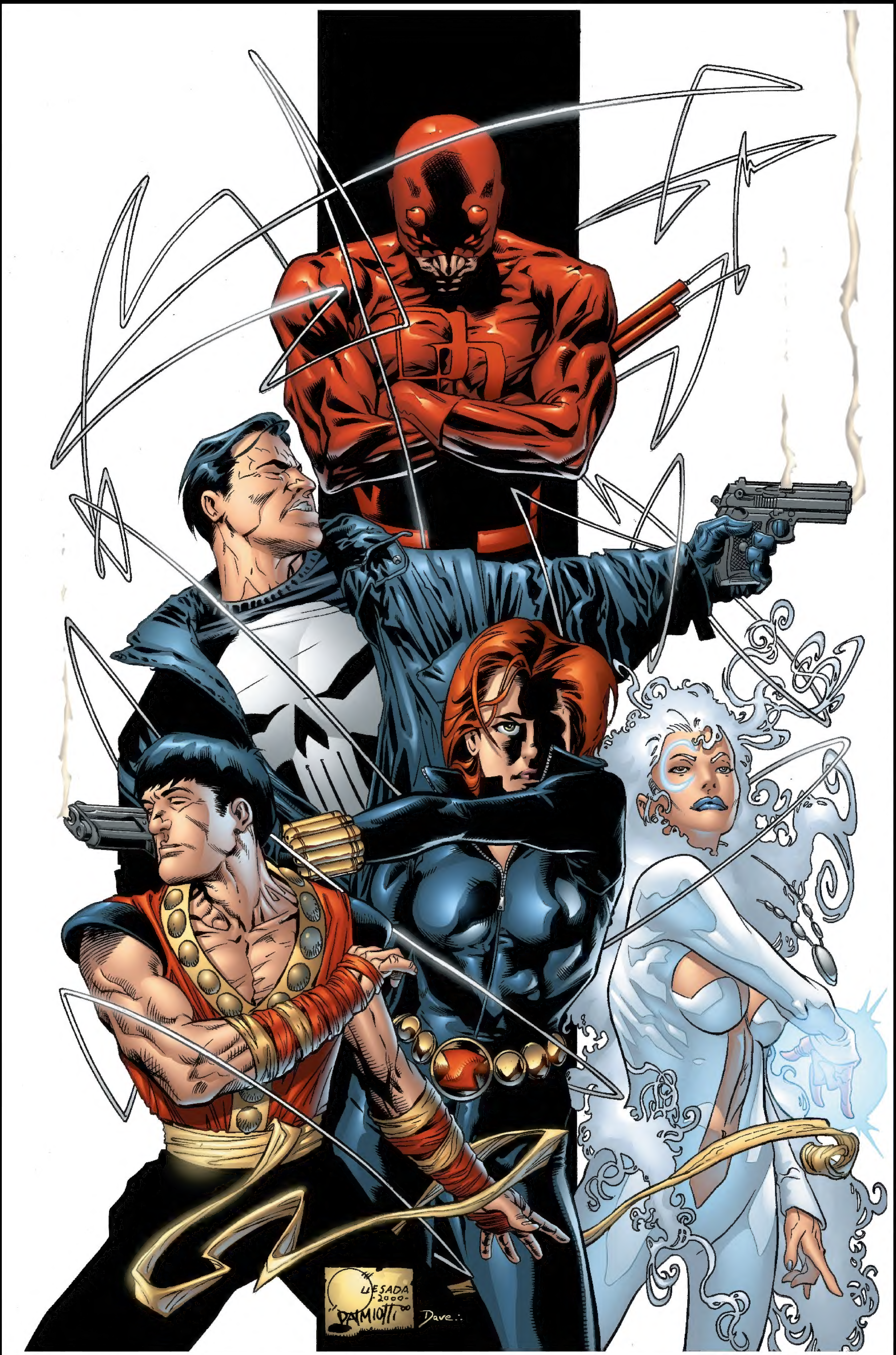
QUESADA 2000
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Dave

# 1

PUNISHER WAR JOURNAL ENTRY. SHEEPSHEAD BAY.
TWO DOZEN RUSSIAN MAFIOSO ARE STINKING UP A WAREHOUSE.
GOOD NEWS, RIGHT?
JUST ONE LITTLE PROBLEM.

# The BURROWERS

A STAN LEE PRESENTATION

I'M NOT THE ONE WHO KILLED THEM.
I PLANNED TO. BUT I GOT HERE TOO LATE.
QUESTION IS, WHO'S GOT THE STONES TO WIPE OUT SO MANY OF THE CHUROSKI VORY?
WHO BESIDES ME, THAT IS.
THEY PUT UP A FIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE A COUPLE THOUSAND ROUNDS WENT OFF IN HERE.
BUT NONE OF THE STIFFS HAVE GUNSHOT WOUNDS.
THEY ALL LOOK LIKE THEY HAD TRUCKS DROPPED ON THEM.

THEN THERE'S THE HOLE IN THE FLOOR.
SMELL COMING FROM IT LIKE CABBAGE BOILED IN STALE BEER.
THE "D" TRAIN DOESN'T STOP HERE.
WHOEVER KAKKED THE RUSSKIES CAME OUT OF THIS HOLE.
DUG RIGHT UP UNDER THEIR BRUNO MAGLIS.
IT'S A MYSTERY. I HATE MYSTERIES.
BUT I KNOW SOMEONE WHO *LOVES* THEM.
BUT I KNOW SOMETIMES EVEN I NEED BACK-UP. AND I KNOW WHICH **NEIGHBORHOOD** HE HANGS IN.

I DON'T NEED EYESIGHT TO FIGURE THIS GUY OUT.
HIS HEART RATE IS ONE-TWENTY.
-PANT -- PANT- STAY AWAY FROM ME, MAN!
I CAN SMELL HIS FEAR.
YOU KNOW I CAN'T DO THAT, DEUCE.
JUST LIKE YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT GOING TO SKATE AFTER KILLING THAT STORE CLERK.
BACK OFF!
I HEAR THE TRIGGER SPRING TIGHTEN BEFORE THE SHOT.
KRAK KRAK KRAK
I MEAN IT, DEVIL!

HIS HEART RACES LIKE A RUNAWAY FREIGHT.
NEXT ONE GOES RIGHT BETWEEN YOUR *HORNS,* DEVIL!
I AM NOT GOING BACK TO --
AGHK!
IT MASKS THE SECOND, *SLOWER* HEART BEATING HERE.
BLAM
BLAM
BET THAT HURTS. LOT OF NERVE ENDINGS GATHER AT THE KNEECAPS.
GAH! GAAH!
YEAH, KNEES ARE A B--
HAVEN'T YOU HAD *ENOUGH* OF ME, CASTLE?
THOUGHT I WAS DOING YOU A FAVOR.
BY NOT *KILLING* HIM.
BY BLOWING OUT THIS POOR GUY'S *KNEES?*

THANKS SO MUCH.
YOU HAVE SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND.
YOU HANG WITH THE FANTASTIC FOUR AND THE AVENGERS AND GUYS LIKE THAT.
I'M NOT EXACTLY *WELCOME* IN THOSE CIRCLES.
FOR GOOD *REASON.*
SOMEONE'S TAKING DOWN THE RUSSIAN MOB OVER IN BROOKLYN.
OR MAYBE IT'S SOME*THING.*
A DOCTOR... GET ME TO A DOCTOR...
I KNOW WHEN I'M OUT OF MY LEAGUE. I RESTRICT MY CRUSADE TO *HUMANS.*
MAYBE SOME OF YOUR *SUPER* PALS WOULD BE INTERESTED.
JUST BEING A GOOD *CITIZEN?*
JUST BRINGING ENOUGH *FORCE* TO THE PROBLEM.
...OR A HOSPITAL...

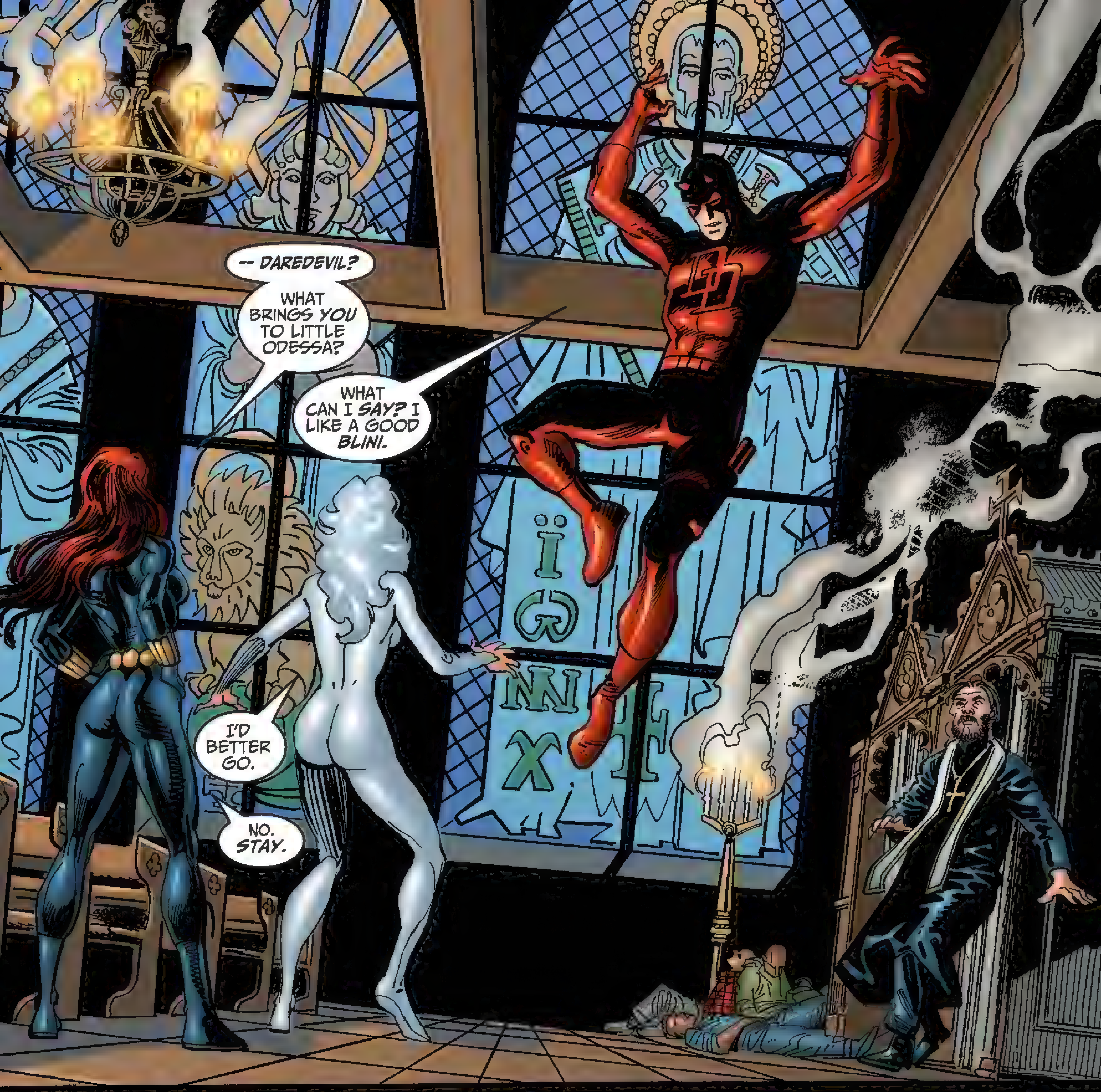
SO WHAT DO WE DO *NOW?*
I LEAVE AND YOU WHISTLE UP IRON MAN OR CAPTAIN AMERICA OR SOMEONE LIKE THAT.
AND WHY SHOULD I *LET* YOU LEAVE?
BECAUSE I COULD ALWAYS TAKE MY FAVOR BACK.
HE WON'T FOLLOW ME.
THE CHOIRBOY ACTUALLY *CARES* ABOUT LICE LIKE THAT.
THAT'S WHY HE'LL NEVER MAKE A DIFFERENCE ON THESE STREETS.
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT NOW.
WE'LL GET YOU TO AN *ER.*

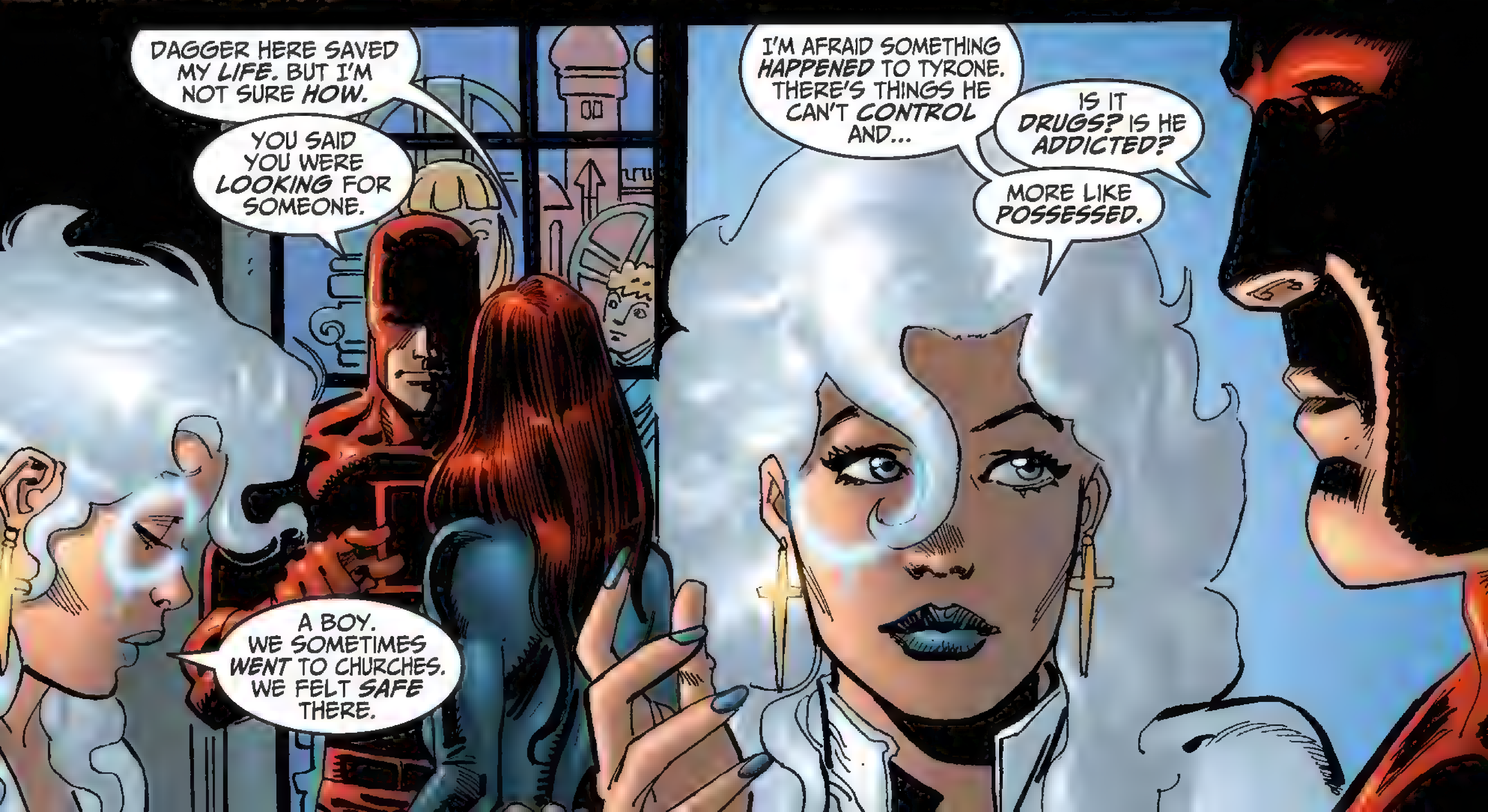
YOU SAY IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG SINCE YOUR LAST CONFESSION.
*FAR* TOO LONG, FATHER.
I'M NOT SURE WHERE TO *BEGIN.*
BEGIN WITH THE *LEAST* OF YOUR SINS.
AREN'T ALL SINS *EQUAL?*
DOESN'T EACH *ONE* OF THEM CONDEMN US TO THE SAME FATE?
"IS THERE REALLY A *DEGREE* TO SIN, FATHER?"

AM I EXCUSED BECAUSE THE SINS I COMMITTED WERE IN THE CAUSE OF GOOD?
CAN HE SEE THAT THE DEED IS SOMETIMES ISOLATED FROM THE SOUL?
"DOES GOD SOMETIMES LOOK AWAY?"
UH?
OUTTA THE CLOSET, OLD MAN!
HEE!
WHAT DO YOU WANT? THIS IS A CHURCH.
CHURCHES GOT MONEY. AND NO SECURITY HASSLES.
WE NEED MONEY. PONY UP, PADRE.
YOU BOYS LIKE TO PLAY IT SAFE, EH?
WHOA.

MAYBE AN UNARMED WOMAN IS EVEN *MORE* YOUR SPEED.
AGHK!
UNNNH!
YOU...

UHK!
THANKS FOR THE HELP. AND *YOU* ARE...?
CALL ME *DAGGER.*
I CAME IN HERE LOOKING FOR A *FRIEND...*
AND YOU *FOUND* ONE. MY NAME IS *NATASHA.*
NO, I MEANT A FRIEND OF *MINE.* SOMEONE I *KNEW.*
I HEARD A GUNSHOT. BUT I GUESS YOU HANDLED IT
*YOU'RE* OUT OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, AREN'T YOU --


-- DAREDEVIL?
WHAT BRINGS YOU TO LITTLE ODESSA?
WHAT CAN I SAY? I LIKE A GOOD BLINI.
I'D BETTER GO.
NO. STAY.


DAGGER HERE SAVED MY LIFE. BUT I'M NOT SURE HOW.
YOU SAID YOU WERE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE.
A BOY. WE SOMETIMES WENT TO CHURCHES. WE FELT SAFE THERE.
I'M AFRAID SOMETHING HAPPENED TO TYRONE. THERE'S THINGS HE CAN'T CONTROL AND...
IS IT DRUGS? IS HE ADDICTED?
MORE LIKE POSSESSED.

YOU STAY WITH US, DAGGER. WE'LL HELP YOU FIND YOUR FRIEND.
WHAT DO SPIES DO IN THESE POST COLD WAR DAYS, NATASHA? YOU STILL KEEP TABS ON THE RUSSIAN MOB?
THE VORY? THEY'RE A CROSS I BEAR FROM THE OLD COUNTRY. I HEAR THINGS.
LOTS OF THE CHUROSKIS WERE KILLED A FEW NIGHTS AGO. NO ONE WILL MISS THEM. EX-KGB SCUM.
I UNDERSTAND IT WAS A MOB HIT.
IT MAY HAVE BEEN MORE THAN THAT.
WANT TO CHECK IT OUT WITH ME?
LIKE OLD TIMES.
JUST LIKE OLD TIMES, TASHA.
WHAT ABOUT THESE BOYS?
CALL NINE-ONE-ONE, FATHER.
I'LL MAKE MY ACT OF CONTRITION ANOTHER TIME, FATHER.
NO NEED, MY CHILD...
...WHATEVER YOUR SINS...
...THEY ARE FORGIVEN NOW.

YOU SAID **MORE** THAN A MOB HIT.
IT COULD BE SOMETHING **EXTRA**-NORMAL.
AND YOUR **SOURCE** FOR THIS?
I'D RATHER NOT **SAY**. LET'S JUST HEAD **OVER** THERE.
NICE WHEELS. **SHIELD** ISSUE?
ONLY THE **BEST** FROM UNCLE NICK.
ANY **SPECIAL** OPTIONS? ROCKET? LASERS?
A KILLER **STEREO.**
HOW DO YOU LIKE THE **COLOR?**
FUNNY.
DO YOU **REALLY** THINK YOU COULD TAKE ON THE JADE DRAGON MA UNARMED AND ALONE?
OR DID YOU EXPECT US ALL TO SURRENDER JUST BECAUSE YOU ARE THE WORLD'S GREATEST MARTIAL ARTS MASTER --

-- SHANG-CHI.
THERE IS NO NEED TO SHED BLOOD.
ALLOW THE GIRL TO LEAVE AND IT ENDS HERE, JIMMY LO.
SO.
YOU HAVE DECIDED.
UNH!
GAH!
IT IS TO BE COMBAT.

NOT COMBAT; AN EXECUTION. WHAT GOOD ARE YOUR SKILLS AGAINST BULLETS?
YOU'VE TAKEN WHAT IS MINE.
THE GIRL DOES NOT BELONG TO YOU, JIMMY. SHE IS --
WHAT'S THIS? AN EARTHQUAKE?
UNNH!
WHAT ARE THEY, BOSS?
WHO CARES? PUMP BULLETS INTO THEM!
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

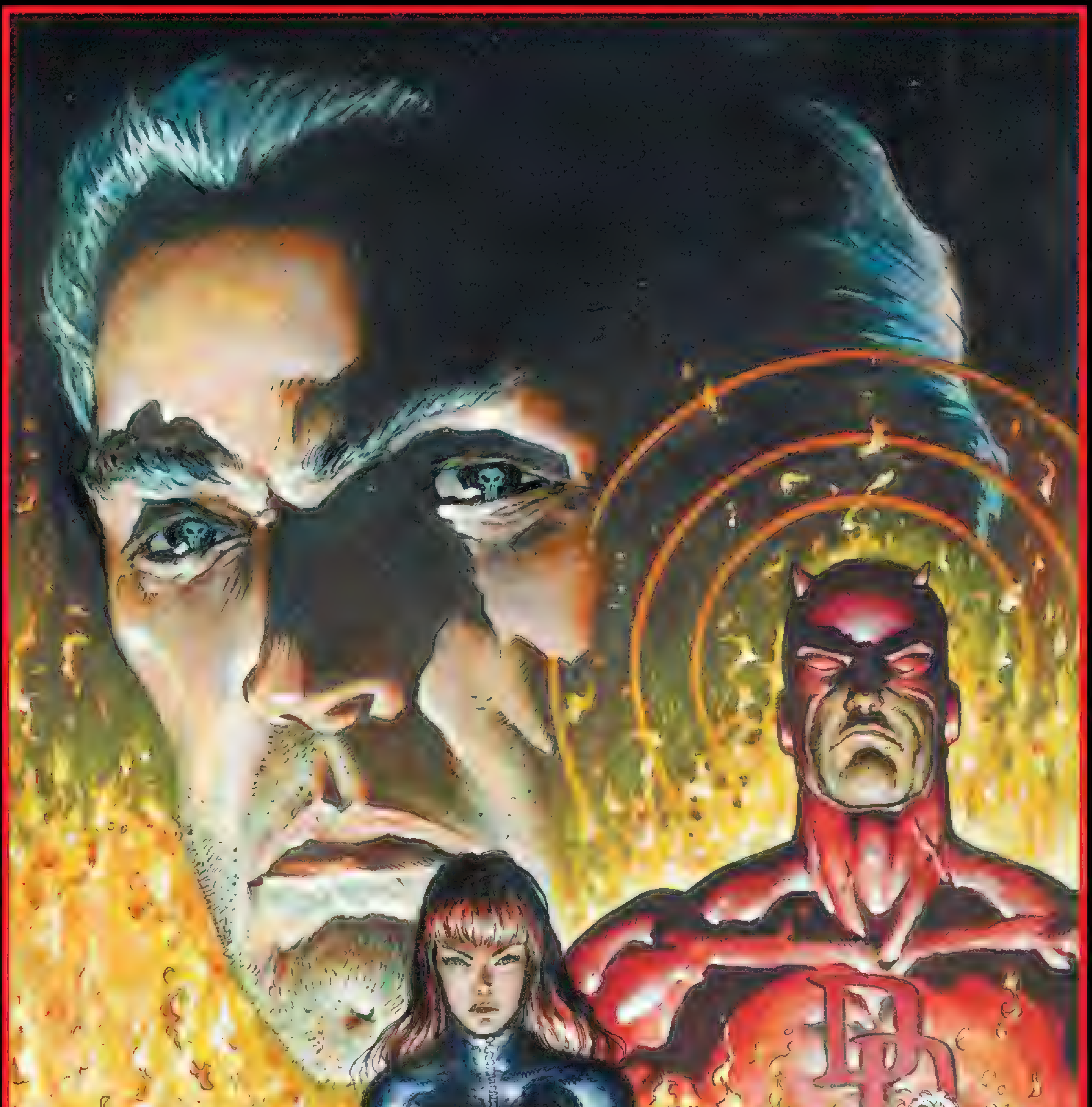
THEY -- THEY'RE *HORRIBLE!*
I AM HERE TO *DEFEND* YOU, LAN. I WILL SEE YOU RETURNED *SAFE* TO YOUR FAM --
UNNNH!
NO!
NOOOOOOO

THE CHUROSKIS HAVE *MANY* STOREHOUSES LIKE THIS.
FILLED WITH KNOCK-OFFS AND SMUGGLED GOODS.
WHAT'S THAT *SMELL?* LIKE A *BARN.*
ONLY *WORSE.*
I DON'T NEED *YOUR* KEEN SENSES TO SMELL THAT STINK.
SO MUCH DEATH...
AND THIS IS WHERE IT *COMES* FROM.
WHAT KIND OF ANIMAL *SMELLS* LIKE THAT?
IT'S BLOOD.
AND SOMETHING *ELSE...*
WE'RE OUT OF OUR DEPTH.
MAYBE I *SHOULD* HAVE CALLED REED RICHARDS.
HUH?
NOTHING.

THE HOLE IS DEEP. IT SWALLOWS ALL LIGHT.
THIS LEADS TO DARKNESS.
A DARKNESS THAT IS MORE THAN THE ABSENCE OF LIGHT.
EXCUSE THE PLAY ON WORDS...
...BUT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.
I'M DISAPPOINTED IN THE CHOIRBOY.
HE DIDN'T BRING OUT THE WORLD CLASS SUPERCREEPS.
TWO FEMALES AND A BLIND GUY.
LOOKS LIKE I'LL STILL BE DOING ALL THE HEAVY LIFTING.

YOU *WILL* REVEAL ALL BEFORE YOU *DIE*, THIEF!
I -- I'M NOT A THIEF -- I'M A *BUSINESS* MAN.
*LIES.*
AT THE ISLAND OF MAETAWA, THE THING I SEEK WILL BE IN THE HANDS OF THIEVES.
THE WITCHES OF THE NORN WHISPERED THUS TO ME.
I DUNNO WHAT YOU'RE *TALKIN'* ABOUT!
HERE, IN THE SAGAS OF OLD -- THE RAGNAHORN. THE LEFT HORN OF AUDHUMLA.
IT IS HERE, MORTAL.
IT'S CRAZY TALK -- I DON'T *KNOW* NOTHING FROM HORNS --
MY PATIENCE GROWS SHORT. AND WITH IT YOUR *LIFE*.
NO...

IT IS THIS HORN THAT WILL ALLOW ME TO VISIT UPON ASGARD MY REVENGE!
IT IS THIS HORN THAT WILL MAKE ALL THE WORLDS MINE!
SHOULD THIS CITY RUN RED WITH RIVERS OF BLOOD --
-- ULIK WILL NOT BE DENIED!


TEX
PALMIOTTI
2000

**MARK TEXEIRA** & **JIMMY PALMIOTTI**

*Marvel Knights #1* Dynamic Forces variant

QUESADA 2000
DANNY MIKI
Dave.

# 2

CAN YOU SEE THE *BOTTOM* OF THIS PIT, DAREDEVIL?
IT'S *WAY* BELOW US, 'TASHA.
HOW CAN ANYONE *SEE* IN THIS DARKNESS?
IT'S A *LONG* STORY, DAGGER.
STAN LEE PRESENTS:
THUNDER BELOW

BUT DAREDEVIL IS LEAPING TO LEDGES HE COULDN'T *POSSIBLY* SEE.
*LATER.*
A HALF MILE UNDER SHEEPSHEAD BAY IS *NOT* THE PLACE FOR EXPLANATIONS.
THIS PIT ISN'T MACHINE DUG.
THESE FEEL LIKE *CLAW* MARKS.
SHH.
I *HEAR* SOMETHING.
LIKE *VOICES.*
*DAREDEVIL!*
WHAT *ARE* THEY?
UNNH!
*'TASHA!* GET *OUT* OF HERE!

NO!
HUH?
YOU'LL HIT DAREDEVIL!
...YOU'RE RIGHT.
GET -- UNNH -- OUT -- WHILE YOU CAN!
DAREDEVIL!
MORE OF THEM!
WHAT DO THEY WANT?
WHO CARES?

I JUST KNOW WE WON'T *LIKE* IT.
OH.
OW!
UNNH!
THOSE CREEPS TOOK MY *JACKET.*
*AND* YOUR FRIEND.
I *HADN'T* FORGOTTEN THAT.
HOW ABOUT GIVING US SOME *LIGHT,* DAG?
*EXCUSE* ME?
THOSE LIGHT-KNIVES. TOSS A FEW AROUND SO WE CAN *SEE.*
I DON'T LIKE USING THEM THAT WAY. THEIR PURPOSE IS TO CLEANSE SOULS.
SAVE SOME SOULS *LATER.* RIGHT NOW, WE NEED THE LIGHT.
I *GUESS.*

THERE'S *MILES* OF THESE TUNNELS.
IT LOOKS LIKE THEY RUN UNDER THE WHOLE BOROUGH. MAYBE THE WHOLE *CITY*.
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
I'LL *TELL* YOU WHAT WE DO.
WE *FIND* ONE OF THESE DIGGERS AND *MAKE* HIM TAKE US TO THE DEVIL.
I DON'T THINK THAT WILL BE A *PROBLEM*.
СкОАвКО?

THREE CARDS DOWN.
ROUND AND ROUND THEY GO.
CAN YOU FIND THE *LADY?*
THERE. THE QUEEN IS *THERE.*
*SORRY,* M'MAN.
%#@$!
THAT'S THE *BREAKS,* M'MAN. BETTER LUCK ON THE *DOW.*
BET.
TODAY
I want to play.
NAW. WE'RE DONE FOR THE NIGHT, BROTHER.
COME BACK *TOMORROW.*
SANTA
EL BA
JEROM

YOU CHEAT PEOPLE.
UH... NO *WAY*, JIM. EVER'BODY'S GOT THE SAME CHANCE TO FIND THE LADY.
YOU CHEAT.
YOU TRICKED HIM.
YOU STOLE HIS MONEY.
UH... WE GOTTA *GO*, MAN.
YES.
YES, YOU DO.

NO... PLEASE...
I DON'T NEED MY HEIGHTENED SENSES TO IDENTIFY THIS STENCH.
IT'S RANK AND ANIMAL.
I KNOW FROM THEIR HEART RATES AND BODY TEMPERATURE--
--THEY'RE NOT HUMAN.

SCREEEEEE
UH!
THOSE LITTLE MONKEYS ARE *TOUGH.*
YOU'RE REALLY *PUSHING* ME, CASTLE.
YOU KEEP *TALKING* LIKE THAT AND I WON'T CUT YOU LOOSE, CHOIRBOY.

UH... HE WANTS TO TALK TO *YOU.*
IS THIS MR. *ULIK* I'M SPEAKING TO?
MR. DRYDEN SEEMS TO THINK I HAVE SOMETHING OF VALUE THAT BELONGS TO *YOU.*
HE *ALSO* TELLS ME YOU HAVE PLACED HIM UNDER CONSIDERABLE DURESS TO RETRIEVE IT.
IF I *HAD* THIS HORN OF AUOHUMLA THAT YOU CLAIM IS YOURS I WOULD NEED PROOF OF OWNERSHIP.
OTHERWISE, I WOULD BE FORCED TO ASK A *CONSIDERABLE* SUM FOR IT.
YOU WILL GIVE ME THE HORN NOW.
AND GIVE ME A COGENT REASON WHY I *SHOULD,* MR. ULIK.

IF YOU DO NOT GIVE ME WHAT IS MINE, I SHALL SHAKE THE PILLARS UPON WHICH THIS CITY RESTS.
I SHALL SHAKE THEM UNTIL NOT ONE STONE RESTS UPON ANOTHER.
I MUST *SAY*, MR. ULIK, I FIND IT DIFFICULT TO TAKE YOUR THREATS SERIOUSLY --
-- SINCE YOU SEEM AFRAID TO COME UP AND TALK TO ME *YOURSELF*.
BUT SHOULD YOU *DECIDE* TO TENDER AN OFFER IN PERSON, I'LL BE HERE ALL NIGHT.
YOU JUST MADE A *BIG* MISTAKE, MR. VAN KLINE.
*HAVE* I?
DEET
THIS ULIK IS ONE GUY YOU *DON'T* WANT TO CHEESE OFF.

"I'VE SEEN HIM MAD. YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE THAT, MR. VAN KLINE."
RRRRRR
ARRRRGGGHH!
RRRRRAAAAAHH!

ZASK
ZASK
ZASK
THEY JUST *SHAKE OFF* MY WIDOW'S BITE.
TRY SOME OF YOUR *BLADES* ON THEM.
THEY GO RIGHT *THROUGH* THEM!
DOES THAT MEAN THEY DON'T *HAVE* SOULS?
HOLD UP.
HEAR THAT *RUMBLING?*
I HEAR IT. WHY ARE WE RUNNING *TOWARD* IT?
BECAUSE I *KNOW* THAT SOUND.
COME *ON!*

THE SUBWAY. THE "D" LINE, IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN.
WHICH WAY DO WE TAKE?
ANY WAY FROM HERE.
WATCH THE THIRD RAIL.
I KNOW. I'VE LIVED IN THE CITY LONG ENOUGH.
LOOKS LIKE A NORTHBOUND TRAIN.
MORE OF THEM!
THESE GUYS HAVE SHORTCUTS DUG EVERYWHERE.
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
WE MAKE THEM REAL SORRY THEY PICKED ON US.
THEN WE'RE GOING TO DIE ALONE HERE, RIGHT?
YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

AND YOU *WILL* NOT DIE.
THESE CREATURES ARE *COWARDLY*. A LITTLE RESISTANCE AND THEY *FLEE*.
FZAAAAAK
I WILL STAY HERE AND *COVER* YOUR RETREAT.
I HAVE A *TOKEN* FOR YOU IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO CALL IN THE *AVENGERS.*
THEY'RE *BUSY* THIS WEEK.
TOO BUSY TO SAVE THE CITY FROM *MONSTERS?*
MAYBE THEY JUST WOULDN'T COME RUNNING ON THE WORD OF A MURDERING *PSYCHO.*
I REALLY *GET* AT YOU, DON'T I, CHOIRBOY?
WHY *IS* THAT?
I'M BROOKLYN. YOU'RE HELL'S KITCHEN.
THE ONLY THING SEPARATING US IS THE EAST RIVER.
YOU WERE RAISED *CATHOLIC,* RIGHT?
SHUT *UP,* CASTLE.
*IRISH* CATHOLIC, AM I RIGHT?
THE NUNS MUSTA *LOVED* YOU.
I *TOLD* YOU TO SHUT UP.
TOUCHED A *NERVE,* HUH?

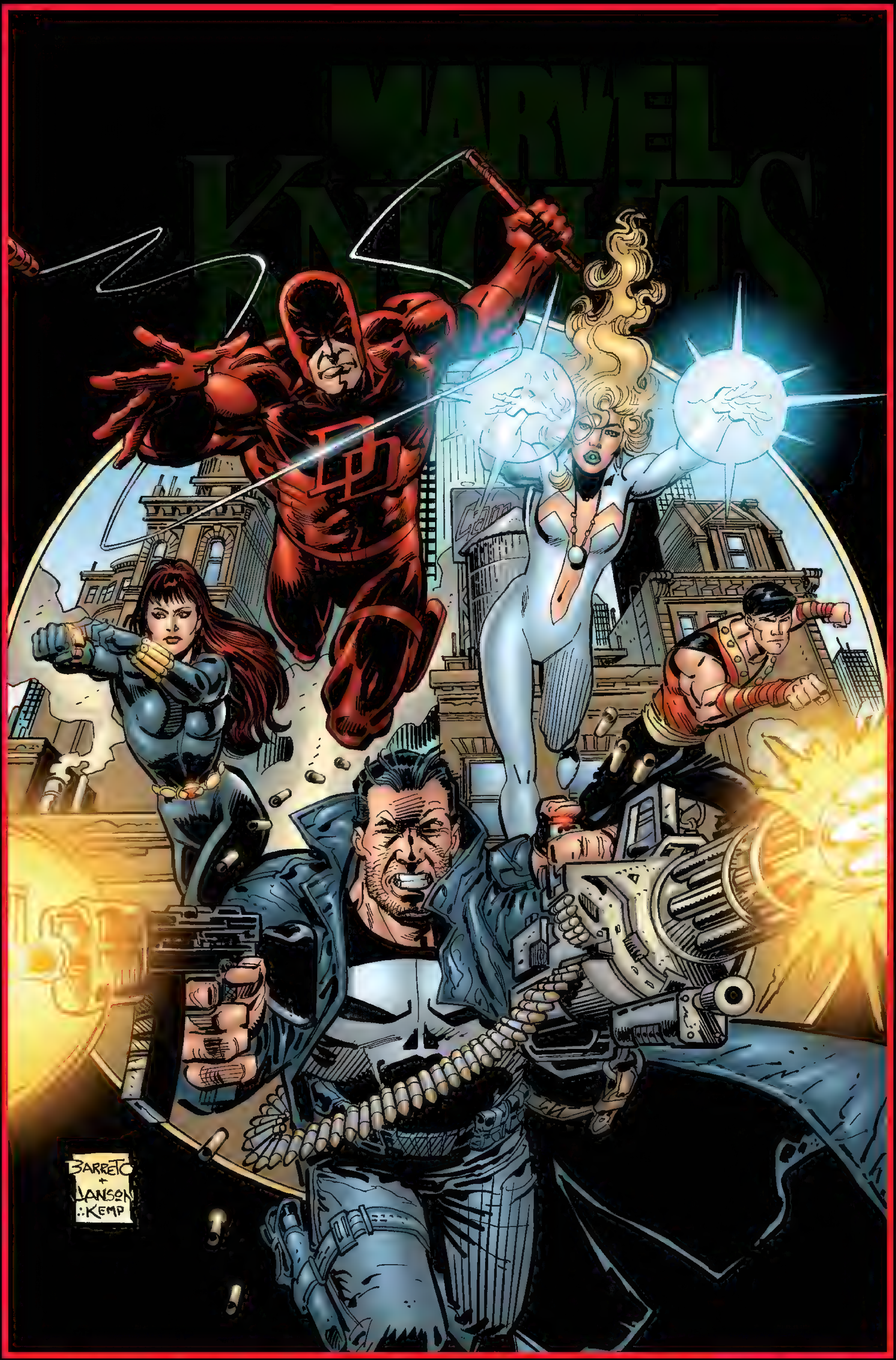
WAIT... HEAR THAT?
I DON'T --
LISTEN.
A *POUNDING* SOUND.
I CAN *FEEL* IT IN THE SOLES OF MY FEET.
IT'S COMING FROM *THIS* WAY.
THIS IS A *TEMPORARY* TRUCE, CASTLE.
WHEN THIS IS *OVER...*
YEAH. YEAH. YEAH.
YOU SAID THERE'S *ANOTHER* TYPE OF THESE MONSTERS?
BIGGER. STRONGER. A *WARRIOR* CLASS.
WHAT'S *YOUR* CONNECTION TO THIS?
THOSE CREATURES TOOK SOMEONE I WAS SWORN TO PROTECT.

I FOLLOWED THEM DOWN HERE, BUT I FEAR I AM TOO LATE.
AND *YOU* ARE --?
UM... MY NAME'S *DAGGER*.
HIS NAME IS *SHANG-CHI*. HE'S THE GREATEST EMPTY HAND FIGHTER ALIVE.
I AM HONORED THAT YOU REMEMBER ME, BLACK WIDOW.
THESE MONSTERS ARE WORKING WITH A *PURPOSE*. AND I DON'T THINK IT'S ANYTHING *GIULIANI* HAS IN MIND.
I SAY WE CALL IN *SHIELD* AND LET *THEM* FIGURE OUT WHAT THESE TUNNELS ARE ABOUT.
MY FATHER OFTEN USED BURROWS SUCH AS THESE TO DARK PURPOSE.
YOUR *FATHER?*
A LONG STORY FOR ANOTHER TIME.
EVERYONE KEEPS *SAYING* THAT.
*CHORT POBERI!*

WE'VE BEEN *DERAILED.*
WE ARE MILES FROM WHERE WE LEFT THE CREATURES.
HM.
EEEEEEEE!
I DON'T THINK WE WERE RUNNING *AWAY* FROM THEM, SHANG.
I THINK WE WERE BEING *HERDED.*

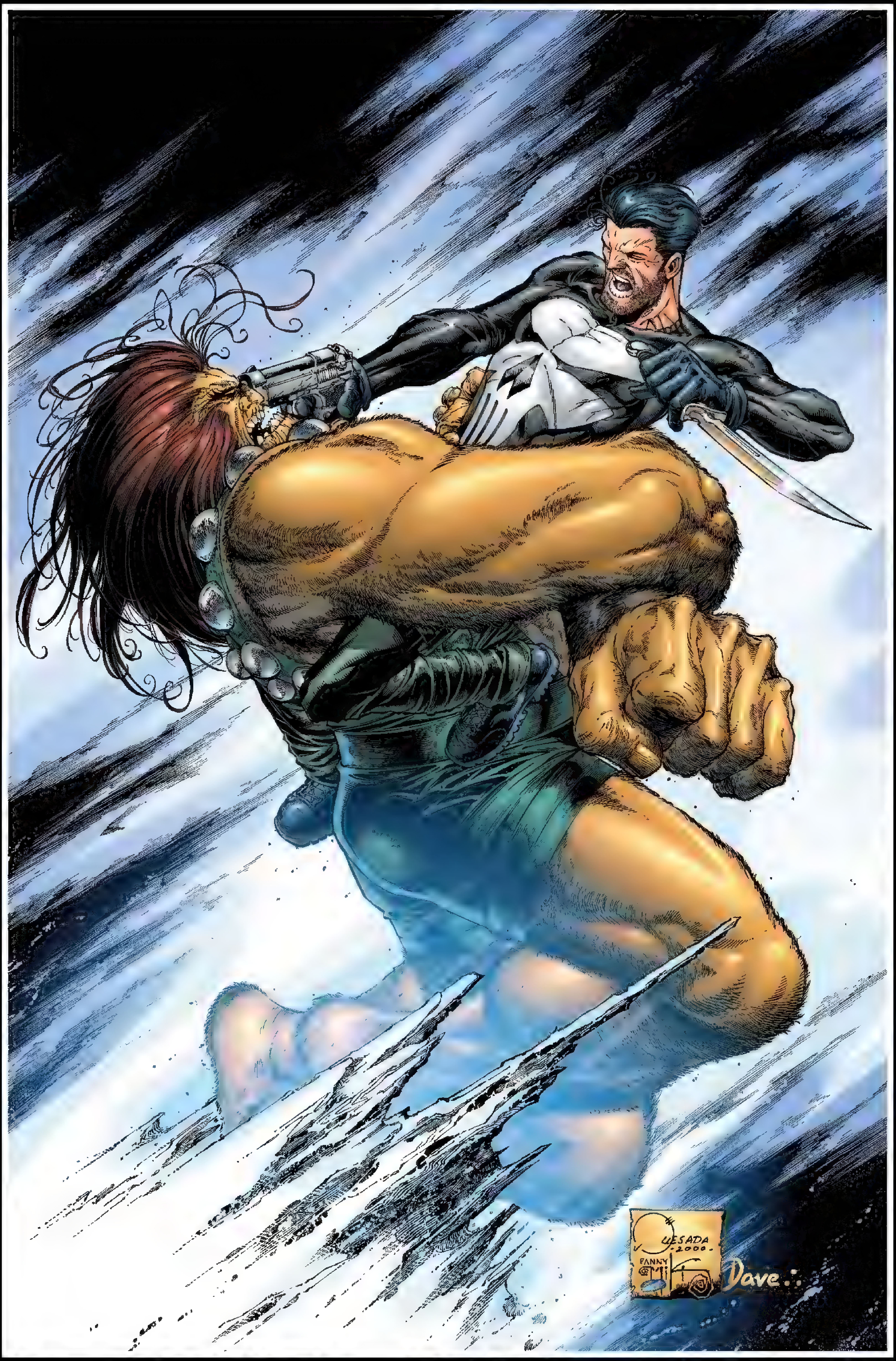
WE'RE GETTING CLOSER.
SO LOUD...
LIKE A PILEDRIVER.
I HEAR WORDS...
IT'S SHOUTING OVER THE NOISE.
I'M GOING TO NEED BIGGER GUNS.
I'M STARTING TO THINK YOU'RE RIGHT, CASTLE...
THROOM
THROOM
THROOM
THROOM
THROOM
THROOM
P90 5.7x28
IT WILL BE MINE!

MAYBE I *SHOULD* HAVE CALLED THE AVENGERS.
THROOOOM
IT WILL BE MINE OR MANY WILL **DIE!**
BARRETO
JANSON
Dave


MARVEL
KNIGHTS
BARRETO
+
JANSON
:KEMP

**EDUARDO BARRETO, KLAUS JANSON** & AVALON'S **DAVE KEMP**

*Marvel Knights #2 variant*


QUESADA 2000
DANNY MIKI
Dave

3

The DESTROYERS
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION
THEY'RE BIG AND SCARY AND THERE'S A LOT OF THEM.
BUT THEY'RE GROUPED CLOSE TOGETHER AND NO ONE'S WATCHING THE PERIMETER.
DEFY ULIK AND DIE!
THROOOOM

TOUGH BUT STUPID.
A 20 MM H.E. ROUND WAKES THEM UP.
BUH-WHRAAAAAM
AN INCENDIARY OR TWO RUINS THEIR DAY.
VROOOOOOSH
AND I'M JUST GETTING STARTED.
WHO THUS ENWRATHS THE HOST OF TROLLS?
AS USUAL, THE CHOIRBOY'S NOT HAPPY.
IS THIS YOUR IDEA OF A STRATEGY, CASTLE?
THOSE ARE FOUNDATIONS THAT BIG S.O.B. IS ROCKING, DAREDEVIL.
HE'S TRYING TO CHOP DOWN A HIGH-RISE.
WHY DON'T YOU RUN UPSTAIRS AND SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO?

YOU CAN'T TAKE ON ALL OF THEM.
A MILLION TO ONE OR A MILLION TO TWO. THE ODDS STILL SUCK.
GO.
DAREDEVIL HATES ME MORE THAN ANYONE ON EARTH BUT HE'S STILL WORRIED ABOUT ME.
I WAS RIGHT.
THE NUNS MUST HAVE LOVED HIM.
A SINGLE MORTAL DARES BEARD US IN OUR LAIR?
THIS WILL NOT STAND!
I WILL CRUSH HIS BONES TO MEAL!
THROOOOOM

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THIS WOULD HAPPEN.
I MANAGED TO GET SOME DO-GOODERS TO TAKE ON THESE MOOKS.
AND NONE OF THEM HAD THE GUTS FOR IT.
SO IT COMES DOWN TO ME.
AGAIN.
YOUR FATE IS MINE, MORTAL!

THEY'RE GETTING CLOSER.
WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH US?
I DON'T REALLY WANT TO KNOW, DO YOU?
MY GRANDFATHER WAS AT THE SIEGE OF STALINGRAD IN NINETEEN FORTY-THREE.
THEY HELD OUT AGAINST THE GERMANS THROUGH TWO WINTERS.
IT WAS A BATTLE THAT THE SOVIETS KNEW THEY COULD NOT WIN.
BUT THEY HELD AND THEY HELD AND THEY HELD.
THEY HELD TO KEEP THE NAZIS BUSY AND BUY THEIR COMRADES TIME TO BUILD NEW TANKS AND ARMIES.
THAT'S WHAT WE HAVE TO DO. BUY TIME.
DOES ANYONE HERE KNOW HOW TO USE A GUN?
NO WAY.
I WAS IN THE NAVY.
THEN YOU KNOW WHAT "REBEL BOARDERS" MEANS?
SURE DO.
WHAT'S THAT MEAN, WHAT SHE SAID?
IT MEANS NOBODY GETS ON THIS CAR.

WHAT NOW, BLACK WIDOW?
WE CARRY THE FIGHT TO THEM AND BREAK UP THEIR ATTACK, DAGGER.
THERE IS LITTLE HOPE OF SURVIVAL FOR ANY OF US.
NEW YORK
THANKS FOR STATING THE OBVIOUS, SHANG.
IT IS BEST TO KNOW WHERE ONE STANDS.
I KNOW WHERE I STAND.
I'VE HAD MY BACK AGAINST THE WALL ALL MY LIFE.

WHAT IS THIS? YOU TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON!
AND TELL ME NOW, DRYDEN!
I TOLD YOU THIS ULIK WAS SERIOUS!
SO SERIOUS HE'S WILLING TO TEAR THE BUILDING DOWN?
MR. VAN KLINE! YOU GOTTA SEE THIS!
JUST WHAT I NEED! THE WHOLE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS!
IT'S LIKE AN EARTHQUAKE OR SOMETHIN'!
INDEED.

THIS IS ALL ABOUT SOME MOLDY OLD COW'S HORN?
WHY IS THIS HEADCASE WILLING TO GO TO WAR OVER THAT?
I WAS ABOUT TO ASK THE SAME THING.
I COULD HEAR EVERY WORD AS I CLIMBED THE BUILDING.
ONE OF THE SIDE EFFECTS OF BEING A BLINDMAN.
COULDN'T HELP BUT OVERHEAR YOUR CONVERSATION, VAN KLINE.
MAYBE YOU SHOULD TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ABOUT.
WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME.
RMMMMMMMBBB

TOKEN ONLY
HA HA HA HA HA HA
YOU LITTLE... YOU GOTTA PAY FOR YOUR RIDES!
LIKE HE'D COME OUTTA THE BOOTH.
HEY, WHAT'S THIS GUY ABOUT?
I'M HERE TO HELP YOU GET WHERE YOU'RE GOING.

I'VE TAKEN A BUSHEL-LOAD OF THEM DOWN BUT THERE'S MORE COMING.
I'M OUTNUMBERED AND OUTMUSCLED.
BUT THE BIG GUY WANTS IT MANO-A-MANO.
BACK!
SUITS ME FINE.
THIS ONE IS MINE.
BLOK
A FRAG ROUND WILL END THIS QUICK.

OR NOT.
BLAAM
YOU ARE BRAVE, MORTAL. BRAVE AND FOOLISH.
HE SHOULD BE SHREDDED TO DOGFOOD. BUT HE'S SMILING.
TIME FOR A HIGH EXPLOSIVE ROUND.
VRAAAMMM
THE BLOOP GUN'S NOT THE ANSWER.
KOFF KOFF

KNOCK-KNOCK LOADS. THEY'LL TAKE A REINFORCED STEEL DOOR OFF ITS HINGES.
CHOOM CHOOM
THIS MOOK SHAKES 'EM OFF.
SPIK
VIING
VIIP
SPAK
AND THE BIG STICK IS ALL THE ORDNANCE HE NEEDS.
THOOM
MAYBE RAPID-FIRE WILL AIR HIM OUT.
BUT CONFIDENCE IS LOW.

WHAT ARE THESE GUYS MADE OF?
THEY COME, THEY GO, THEY COME BACK.
HOW MANY TIMES, WIDOW? I'VE LOST COUNT.
FOUR. AND THEY MASS FOR ANOTHER ATTACK.
MISTER!
I SEE THEM.
DIRTY LITTLE MUTTS COMIN' FROM EVERY-WHERE!
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

I THOUGHT AT FIRST THESE GUYS WERE LOOKING TO MOVE ON THE BIG APPLE'S MOBS.
BUT YOU CAN'T RUN THE UNDERWORLD FROM UNDERGROUND.
SO WHAT ARE THEY AFTER?

I FEED A HUNDRED ROUNDS INTO THE BIG GUY AT THIRTEEN RPS.
VRRRRRR
HE KEEPS ON COMING.
I THINK I'M GETTING SOMEWHERE.
THRUMM
I THINK I'M ANNOYING HIM.
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
YOU WILL SURRENDER NOT. MOST ADMIRABLE, WARRIOR.
IT WOULD NOT DO FOR ULIK TO SLAY A COWARD.
BUH BOOM

FEEL THAT?
THAT'S THIS ULIK GUY MAKING LIKE PAUL BUNYAN.
AND THIS BUILDING IS A BIG OLD REDWOOD.
SO, WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO TO END THIS CALAMITY?
I THINK YOU KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT.
AND YOU KNOW WHICH ONE OF THESE ARTIFACTS THE BIG GUY WANTS.
HAND IT OVER AND HE'LL GO AWAY.
I TELL YOU WHAT.
I'LL CONSIDER IT.
FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH.

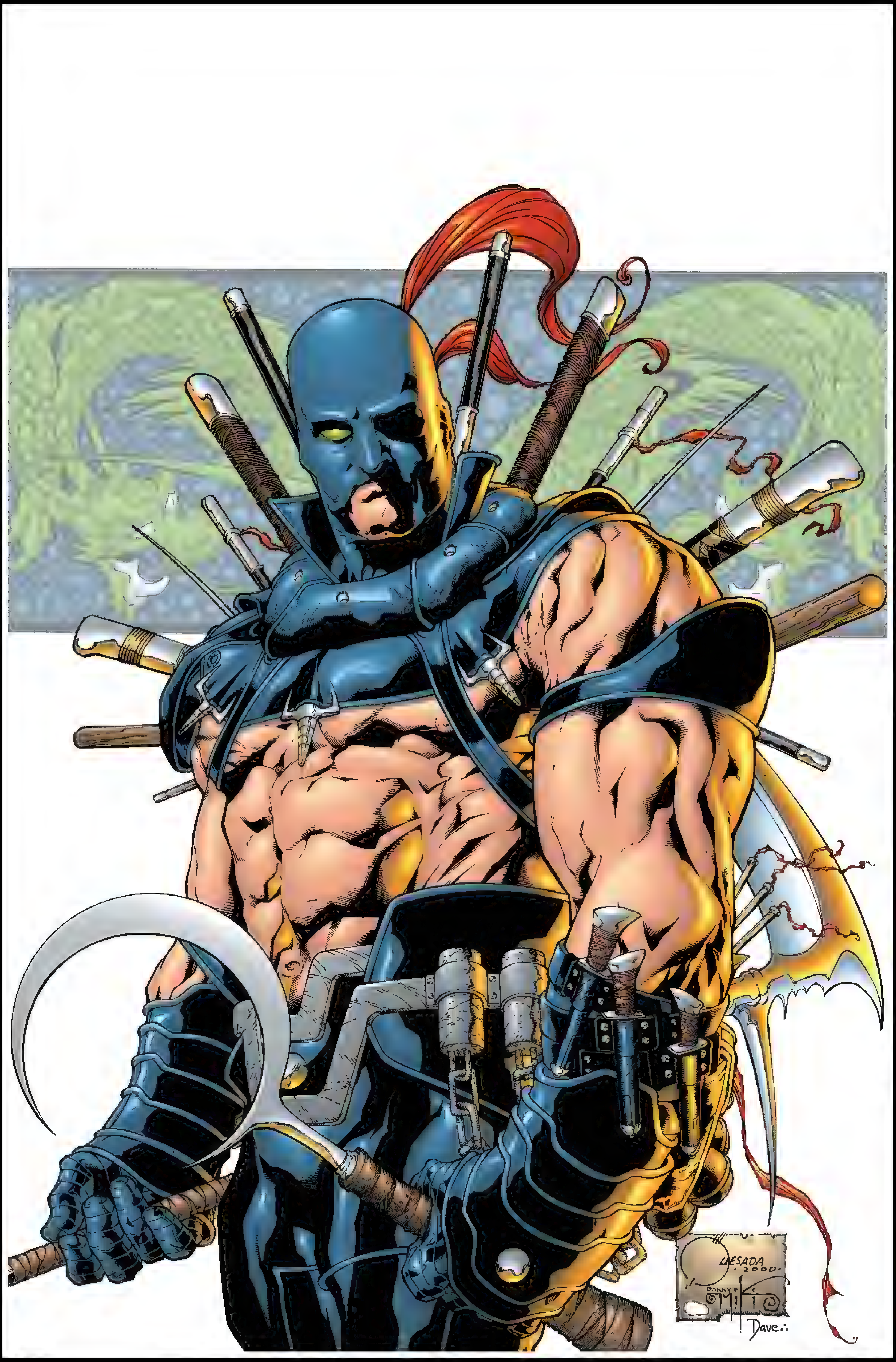
I'M ALMOST OUT OF BULLETS. NOT THAT THEY DID ME ANY GOOD.
I HAVE MY HOLD-OUT GUN.
NOW IT ENDS, WARRIOR.
UNNH!
SIX .44 MAGNUM HOLLOWPOINTS AND HE LAUGHS.
HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
I'M DOWN TO MY NEXT TO LAST OPTION.
STRONG FOR A MORTAL THIS ONE!
WATCH AS I CRUSH HIS HEAD LIKE A ROTTEN GRAPE!
DROP FORGED TITANIUM SNAPS LIKE DRY PASTA.
UH?

IT IS GOOD. IT IS GOOD THAT YOU DIE WITH A BLADE IN YOUR HAND.
YOU BELONG IN VALHALLA.
NOW FOR A LITTLE SOMETHING I CALL THE FINAL WORD.
YOU WILL SEE WHERE WARRIORS GO WHEN THEY DIE.
A LITTLE SOMETHING I COOKED UP MYSELF. MAIN INGREDIENT: SPENT PLUTONIUM.
A PARADISE OF WAR AND CARNAGE. I SEND YOU THERE.
LET'S GO TOGETHER!
THIS'LL TAKE CARE OF MOFUGLY AND ALL HIS HAIRY LITTLE PALS.

DROP HIM, TOO-TALL.
ANOTHER ONE. IN CRIMSON.
YOU WISH ALSO TO DIE BY ULIK'S HAND?
NOT TODAY THANKS.
BUT I DO HAVE WHAT YOU CAME TO THE CITY FOR.
THE HORN OF AUOHUMLA. NOW WE MAY HOLD SWAY OVER THE FROST GIANTS.
GREAT. DON'T STOP TO PICK UP ANY SOUVENIRS ON YOUR WAY HOME.
WE WILL DO SO, CRIMSON ONE. BUT ONLY BECAUSE IT IS ULIK'S WILL.

WE CANNOT WITHSTAND ANOTHER ATTACK, BLACK WIDOW.
I CAN BARELY STAND UP. THIS TIME THEY'LL GET PAST US.
I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THAT, DAGGER. LOOK OUT THERE.
THEY'RE GONE.
LIKE SOMEONE CALLED THEM OFF.
AND WE DIDN'T FIND DAREDEVIL.
PERHAPS HE IS THE CAUSE OF THEIR WITHDRAWL.
YEAH. THAT MAKES SENSE.

-KAFF- -KAFF-
LOOKS LIKE YOU GOT ME RIGHT WHERE YOU WANT ME, CHOIRBOY.
I'M TOO TIRED FOR THIS, CASTLE.
ULIK AND HIS GANG OF WHATEVER-THEY-WERE ARE GONE.
WE WON.
"WE"?
YOU GET A PASS THIS TIME. BUT DON'T MAKE TOO MUCH OF IT.
NEXT TIME THE HAMMER FALLS IT'LL BE FOR GOOD, CASTLE.
NEXT TIME, CHOIRBOY.


QUESADA 2000
DANNY MIKI
Dave

# 4

A-3
STAN LEE PRESENTS
ZARAN

7.
AIM
AIM
AIM
AIM

AIM
AIM
AIM

AIM
AIM
BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS LAB

THIS IS THE FULL S.H.I.E.L.D. FILE ON CASTLE.
IT MAKES FOR SOME PRETTY *UGLY* READING.
FUJI-FILM
CD-R
650
74
OF *COURSE,* IT DOES. THE MAN'S A *SERIAL* KILLER, 'TASHA.
THERE'S NOTHING HERE WE DON'T ALREADY *KNOW,* DAREDEVIL.
FRANK CASTLE. FORMERLY FRANCIS CASTIGLIONE. BORN IN BROOKLYN. EXTENSIVE MILITARY SERVICE.
HIS FAMILY WAS MURDERED RIGHT IN *FRONT* OF HIM IN CENTRAL PARK.
SINCE THEN HE'S KILLED MORE MOBSTERS AND TERRORISTS THAN A TURKISH EARTHQUAKE.

WHAT ABOUT *TYRONE?*
YOU PROMISED TO HELP ME FIND MY FRIEND.
HE LIVES HIS LIFE LIKE A HUNTED ANIMAL.
NO PAPER TRAILS. NO DISCERNIBLE PATTERNS.
WE *WILL,* DAGGER. I GAVE HIS DESCRIPTION TO SOME OF MY PEOPLE.
IF HE'S *ANYWHERE* IN THE FIVE BOROUGHS, WE'LL FIND HIM.
IT'S JUST THAT I'M *WORRIED.* THAT'S ALL.
EXPRESSO CAPUC
HE'S KINDA *MOODY.* I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE MIGHT DO.
BETWEEN *'TASHA* AND ME, WE'LL FIND HIM.
BUT I THINK WE SHOULD CONCENTRATE ON THE *PUNISHER* RIGHT NOW...
55.89m
...LIKE IT OR NOT, HE'S THE REASON WE'RE ALL HERE.
THAT PRICKLY FEELING ON THE BACK OF MY SCALP WAS RIGHT.

HE'S BEEN ALLOWED TO WALK THE STREETS TOO LONG.
I THINK THE FOUR OF US SHOULD BRING HIM DOWN FOR GOOD.
HE'S THE GREATEST EVIL THIS CITY FACES.
AFTER OUR LAST TWO MEETINGS, THE CHOIRBOY IN THE DEVIL PAJAMAS IS OBSESSED WITH ME.
I'D BETTER KEEP TABS ON HIM. HIS LITTLE SQUAD OF DO-GOODERS COULD GET LUCKY.
THIS IS AS CLOSE AS I CAN GET TO THE CHOIRBOY.
SOMEHOW HE ALWAYS KNOWS WHEN I'M AROUND. LIKE HE CAN SMELL ME.
61.33m
ALL I SEE IS A MAN WHO DESTROYS EVIL.
THAT'S THE ASIAN GUY. HE'S A NEW FACE.
25x
62.90m
I KNOW EVIL. I WAS BORN OF EVIL.
THAT'S GOING TO NEED TO BE LOOKED INTO.
30x

I'M NOT *DENYING* THAT WE HAVE THE SAME ENEMIES, SHANG.
BUT THE PUNISHER USES MOB TACTICS *AGAINST* THE MOB. THAT MAKES HIM NO BETTER THAN *THEY* ARE.
*BLAH. BLAH. BLAH.*
CASTLE CALLS IT HIS "WAR." IT'S MORE LIKE HIS *NEUROSIS.*
HE'D WASH THE STREETS IN BLOOD.
PLUS HE LED US BY THE *NOSE* AGAINST THOSE MONSTERS WHO WERE BURROWING UNDER THE STREET.
IS *THAT* WHAT'S GOT YOUR TIGHTS IN A TWIST, DAREDEVIL?
HE *PLAYED* US, 'TASHA. SURE, I'M ANGRY ABOUT THAT.
BUT THE PUNISHER *STILL* NEEDS TO BE STOPPED.
AND HOW DO WE *FIND* HIM?
THAT'S *EASY,* DAGGER...
...WE FOLLOW THE BODIES.
*I LIKE THAT.*

AIM
AIM
AIM
AIM

WHAT OF LIN?
HAVE YOU FOUND OUR *DAUGHTER*, SHANG-CHI?
I COULD NOT *SAVE* HER, UNCLE.
BUT THE MEN WHO *TOOK* HER ARE DEAD.
YOU DID YOUR BEST, SHANG.
YOUR WORDS ARE KIND. BUT I *FAILED* YOU.
I AM SO *SORRY*.
LIN...

THIS IS *NICE*.
YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE *APARTMENT* YET.
I KNOW. THIS BUILDING IS *BEAUTIFUL*, BLACK WIDOW.
PLEASE CALL ME *NATASHA*.
IS THIS NICER THAN *YOUR* PLACE, DAGGER?
I DON'T REALLY *HAVE* A PLACE.
WHERE DO YOU SLEEP?
IN *CHURCHES* MOSTLY. CLOAK AND I FELT *SAFE* THERE.
DO YOU *REALLY* THINK YOU AND DAREDEVIL CAN FIND TYRONE?
DAREDEVIL WOULDN'T SAY IT IF HE DIDN'T *MEAN* IT.
WE'LL FIND HIM --
"-- *WHEREVER* HE IS."
you can walk.
HUH?

THIS SPACE IS FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT WALK.
SO *WHAT*, SPACECASE? THERE'S *PLENTY* OF ROOM TO PARK.
SO PARK ELSEWHERE.
WHO'RE YOU? THE *CRIPPLE* POLICE?
YOU DON'T LIKE WHERE MY CAR'S PARKED, *YOU* MOVE IT!
I. THINK I WILL.
I JUST WISH HE WAS *WITH* ME.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO STAY IN THE *MEANTIME?*
I DON'T KNOW.
YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY WITH *ME.*
YOU'RE *KIDDING.*
*NO* I'M NOT. STAY AS LONG AS YOU *WANT.*
THAT WOULD BE *GREAT,* NATASHA.
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DO SOME *CLOTHES* SHOPPING FOR YOU, THOUGH.
REALLY?
THAT OUTFIT'S CUTE BUT A LITTLE... *REVEALING.*
BUT FIRST, I'LL MAKE DINNER. I WAS THINKING --
NATASHA... WHO'S THAT?
*NICK FURY?*
MAKE THAT DINNER FOR *THREE,* NATASHA. WE NEED TO *TALK.*

AIM
LEVEL 4
DECON
UNIT
BIOHAZARD
CONTAMINANTS
WITHIN

Z99

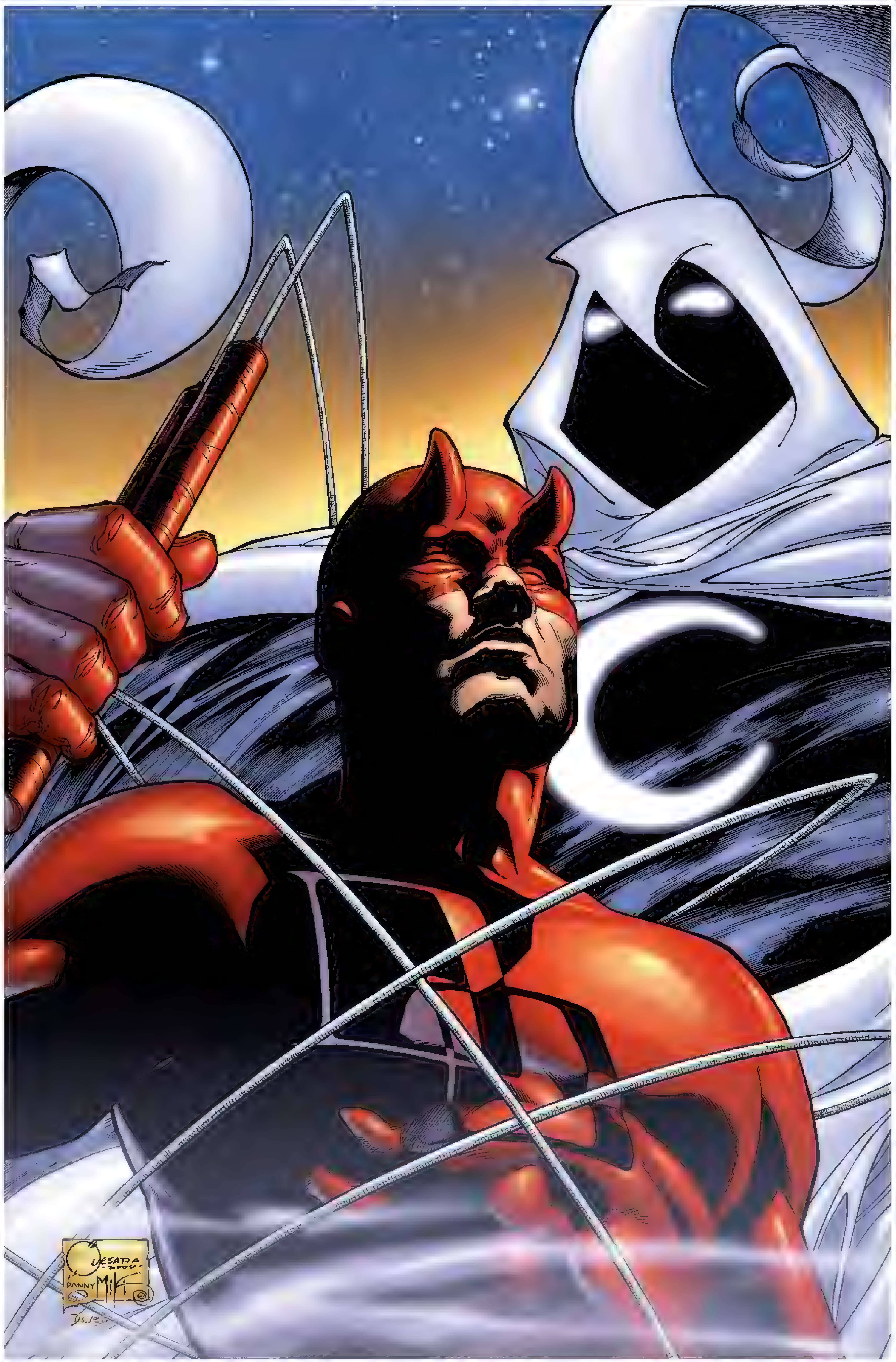
THOMAS
1212
PLEASANT
LANE

MY ONLY GUIDE IS THE SOFT SOUND OF THE COOING PIGEONS.
AS IT GROWS LOUDER I JUDGE THE DISTANCE,
BOUTIQUE
HEIGHTS MEAN NOTHING TO A MAN WITHOUT SIGHT.
UP AND DOWN ARE ONLY DIRECTIONS.
ANOTHER SOUND.
BARELY AUDIBLE.
A SOFT MECHANICAL WHIRR.

YOU'RE A HARD MAN TO KEEP UP WITH, DAREDEVIL.
THAT'S THE GENERAL *IDEA,* SPECTOR.
PLEASE...
...MAKE IT ***MOON KNIGHT.***
WHAT'S UP, SPECTOR? THE ***CLUBS*** CLOSE EARLY?
FUNNY GUY. I HEARD YOU WERE FORMING A ***TEAM.***
REALLY?
I WANT *IN.*

THE CHEMICAL AGENT YOU SEEK, MASTER.
YOU HAVE DONE WELL, ZARAN.
THERE WERE NO WITNESSES?
NO ONE WHO MAY SPEAK.
EXCELLENT.
THOUGH ADVANCED IDEA MECHANICS IS A MISGUIDED GROUP, THEY ARE VENGEFUL.
I COULD CRUSH THEM EASILY, OF COURSE.
BUT I PREFER NOT TO SHOW MY HAND IN THIS.
MOST WISE, MASTER.
I HAVE ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU, ZARAN.
DO YOU REMEMBER A FIGHTER CALLED SHANG CHI?
YES, MASTER.

YOU VERY NEARLY *KILLED* HIM ON ANOTHER OCCASION.
IT IS FORTUITOUS THAT YOU FAILED FOR YOU SERVED A LESS *WORTHY* MASTER.
WHO *BETTER* TO SERVE IN THE MATTER OF THE EXECUTION OF SHANG-CHI THAN I --
-- HIS OWN *FATHER.*


QUESADA 2000
DANNY MIKI

# 5

WAR JOURNAL ENTRY.
CHANGING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES IS ALL A PART OF WAR.
THIS CROWD PRESENTS A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.

I'VE GOT THESE FOUR TRACKING ME ALL OVER THE CITY. THAT CAN BE TURNED TO MY ADVANTAGE IF I CAN LEAD THEM BY THE NOSE AGAIN.
THESE HEROES COME WITH PASTS. THEY'RE ALL BORDERLINE. ALL OUTLAWS.
DAREDEVIL. THE ALTAR BOY. HE'S GOT A MAD-ON FOR ME THAT GOES DEEPER THAN PERSONAL. HE'S BROUGHT THE OTHERS TOGETHER TO HUNT ME. BUT THERE'S MORE. THE GUY HAS SOME KIND OF SIXTH SENSE.
THE BLACK WIDOW. NATASHA ROMANOV. EX-KGB. STILL WITH S.H.I.E.L.D. AS FAR AS I KNOW. WITH HER RESOURCES SHE MIGHT BE THE MOST DANGEROUS OF THE CREW.
Family and Friends
THEY CALL THIS ONE DAGGER. I'VE RUN INTO HER BEFORE. SOME KIND OF FREAK. SHE THROWS NON-LETHAL DAGGERS MADE OF LIGHT. NOT SURE WHAT THAT'S ABOUT. USUALLY PARTNERED WITH BLACK MALE NAMED CLOAK. HIS WHEREABOUTS ARE UNKNOWN.
SHANG-CHI. THIS ONE INTERESTS ME. WICKED FAST WITH HIS HANDS AND FEET. SOME KIND OF LIVING URBAN LEGEND DOWN IN CHINATOWN.

I DON'T KNOW HIS STORY. FROM CONVERSATIONS I'VE TAPED WITH THIS CROWD THERE'S ALWAYS HINTS ABOUT HIS PAST.
TIES TO SOME KIND OF ASIAN ORGANIZED CRIME FIGURE. MAJOR **TRIAD** ACTION IS MY GUESS.
I'M SURE IT'S A FAMILY THING.
I'LL DIG AROUND IN THIS SHANG-CHI HISTORY FOR FILTH.
THEN KILL IT.
GISH
SHANG-CHI, YOU DISHONOR ME.
I WAS BORN TO DISHONOR.

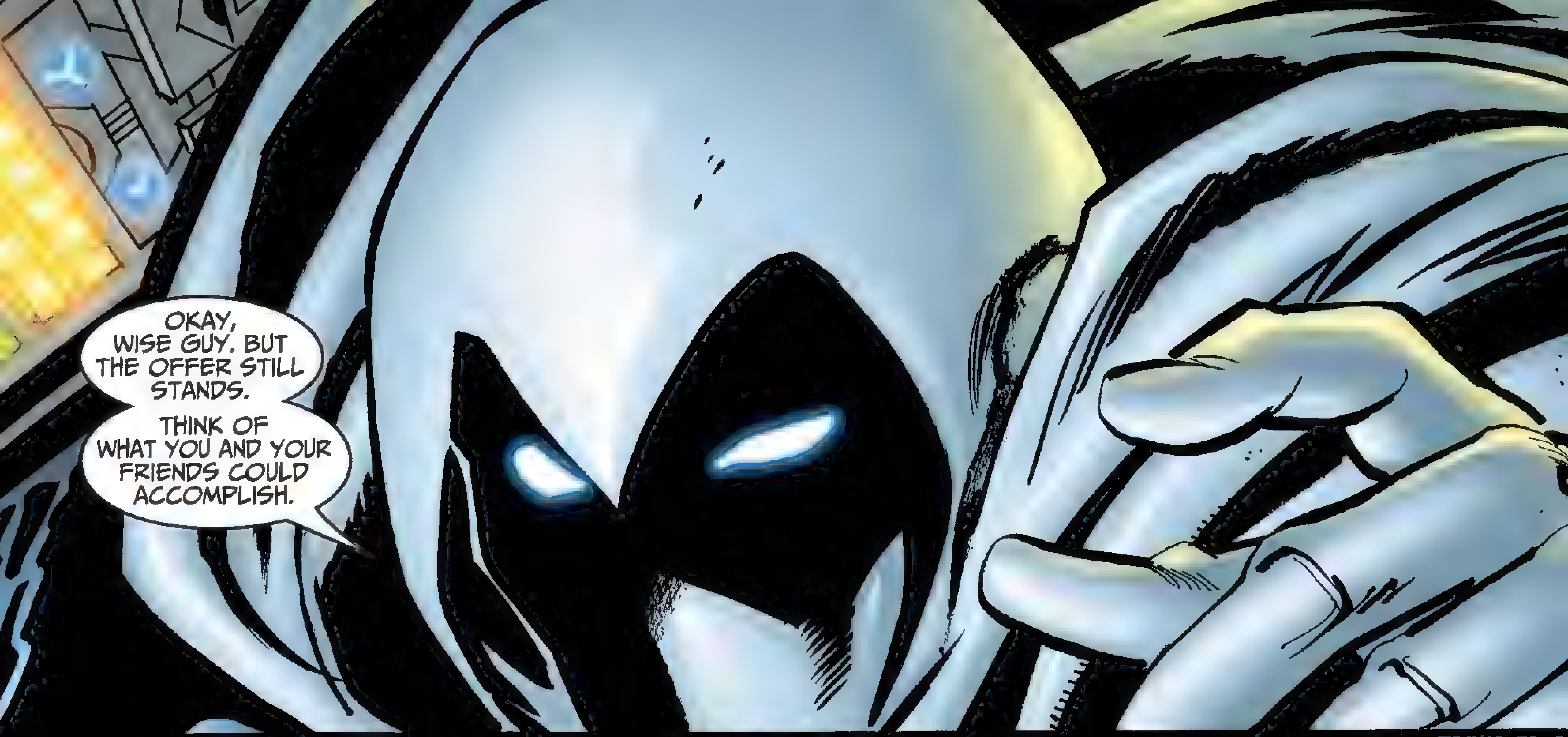
ONCE IT AMUSED ME TO LET YOU LIVE.
NO MORE.
I HAD HOPES YOU WOULD SEE THE TRUTH OF THE WORLD.
BUT FOR ALL YOU HAVE SEEN...
FOR ALL YOUR SKILLS...
ALL YOUR STRENGTH...
YOU ARE STILL A FOOL.

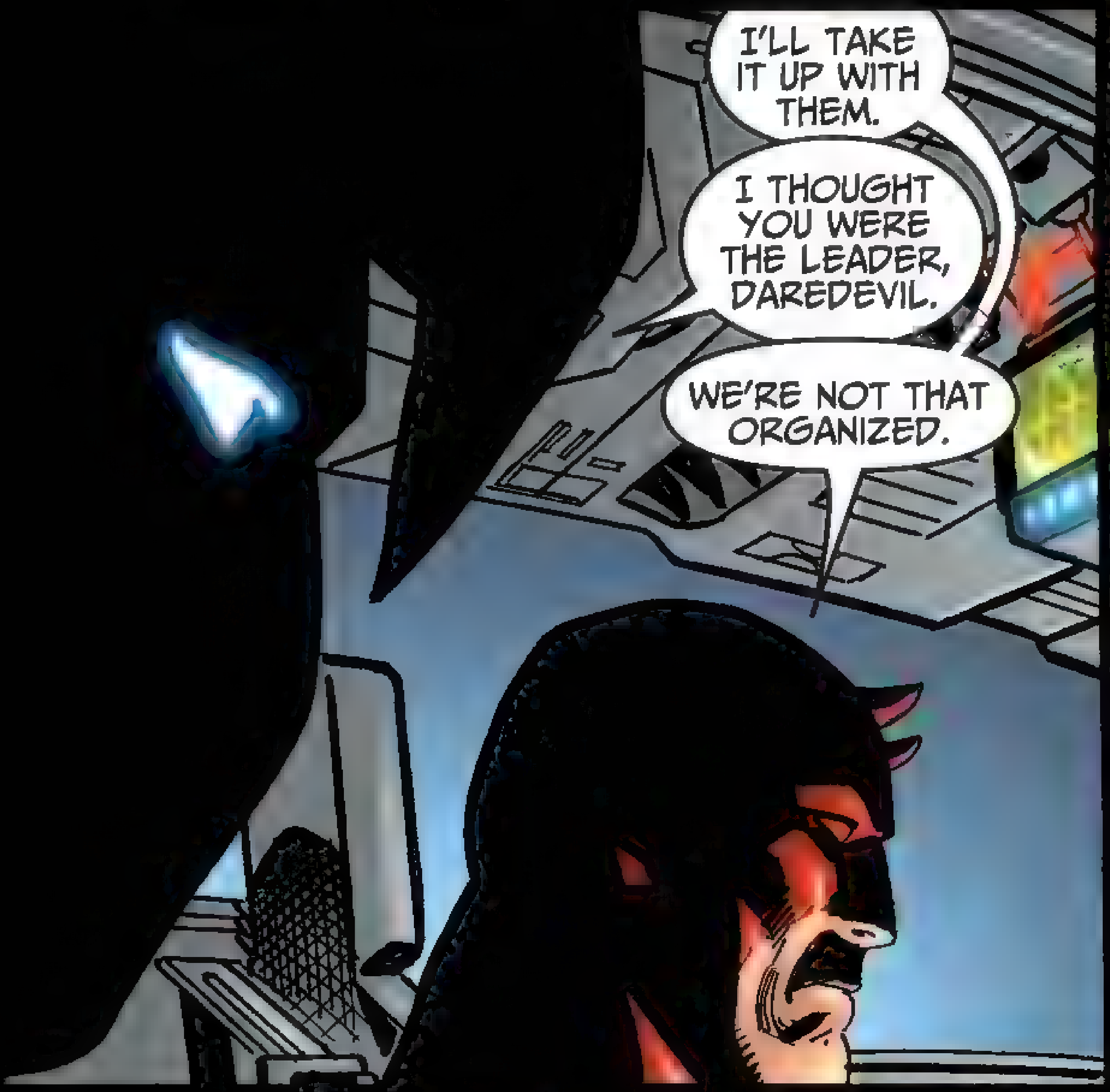
I WILL NOT SUFFER A FOOL.
UH!
UNNH!
NOT FROM MY OWN HOUSE.
NOT ONE WHO BEARS MY LEGACY.

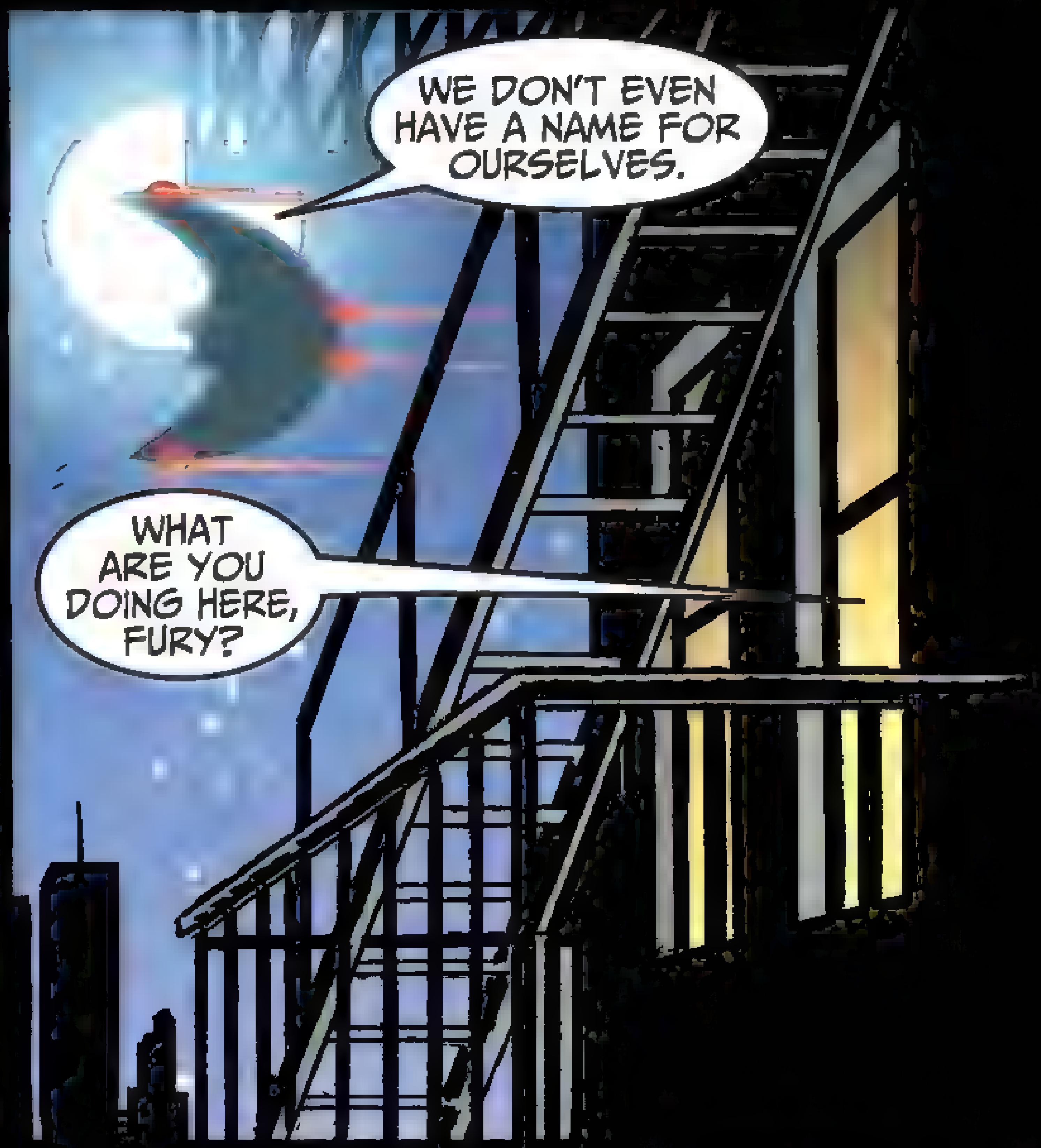
YOU WILL DIE NOW.
YOUR NAME AND MEMORY EXPUNGED FROM ALL EXISTENCE.
AS THOUGH YOU NEVER EXISTED.
FATHER.
YOU ARE NO SON TO ME.
ALL THE WORLD AND MORE COULD HAVE BEEN YOURS.
HAD YOU BUT SEEN THE TRUTH OF THINGS.
GUH?
I HEARD YOU MOVING ABOUT.
AUNT MUI.
I BROUGHT YOU TEA AND SOMETHING TO EAT.
THAT WAS NOT NECESSARY, AUNT.

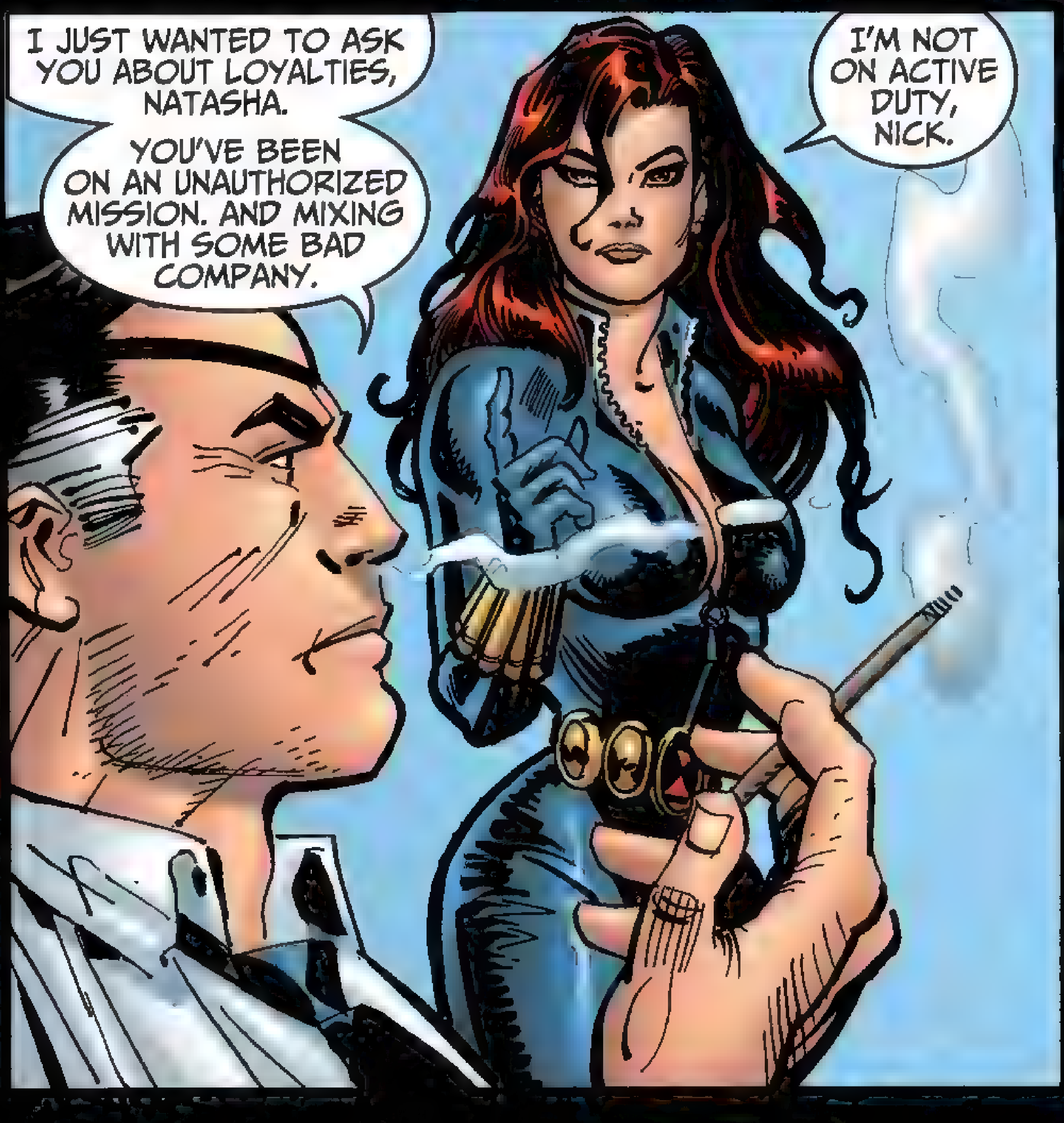
YOU ARE TOO KIND.
MY HUSBAND AND I HAVE WELCOMED YOU INTO OUR HOME AND OUR HEARTS.
IT IS GOOD TO HAVE A YOUNG ONE HERE.
ESPECIALLY AS OUR LOVELY LIN IS NOW GONE.
AND YOU HAVE NO HOME OF YOUR OWN? NO FAMILY?
I PREFER NOT TO TALK ABOUT MY FAMILY.
THAT IS TO BE RESPECTED.
PLEASE ACCEPT OUR GIFT OF FOOD AND OUR THANKS FOR YOUR EFFORTS TO FIND OUR DAUGHTER.
GOOD DAY TO YOU, SHANG-CHI.
AND YOU, AUNT.

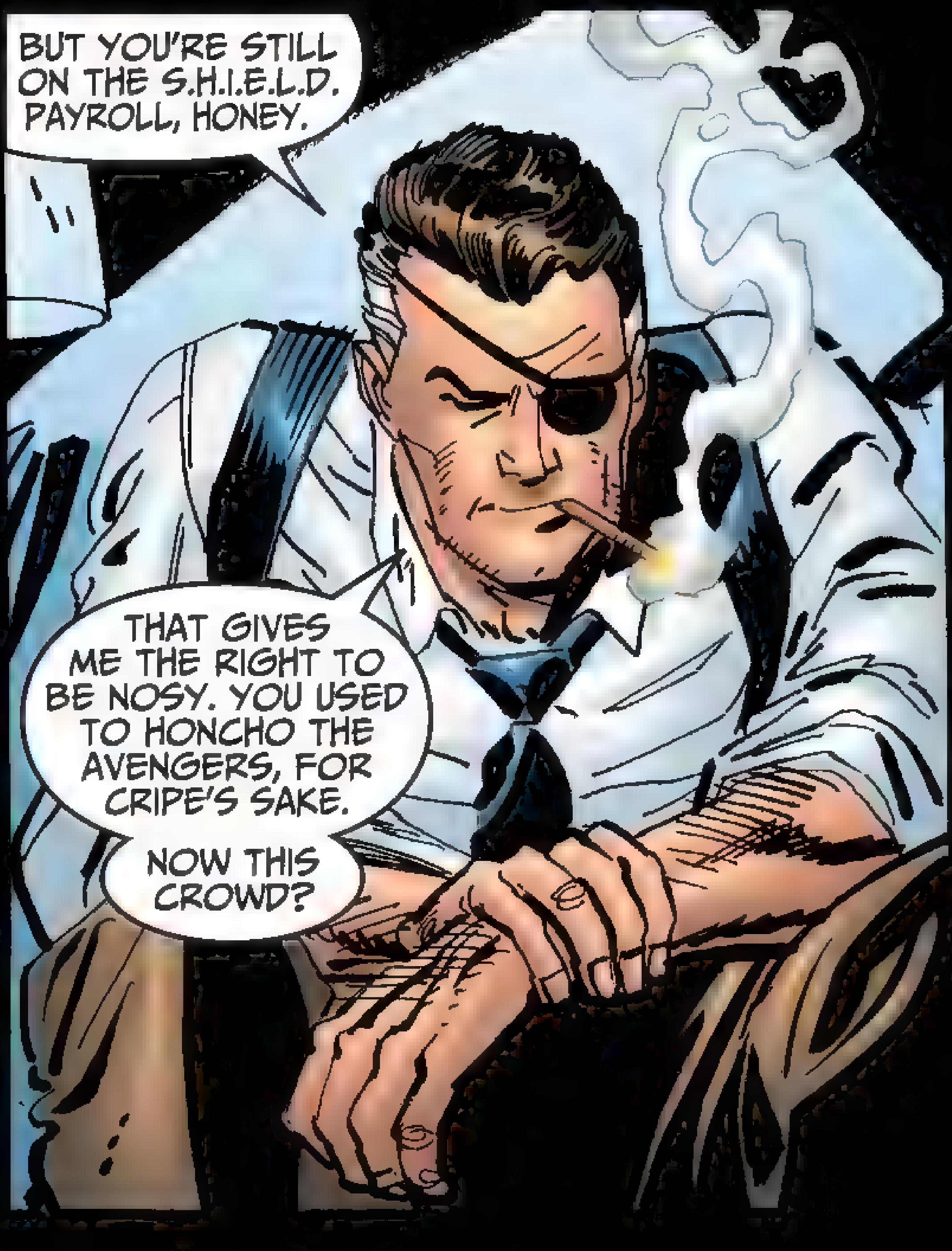
SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I'M NOT SURE.
WHAT'S NOT TO LIKE, 'DEVIL?
YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT A CRIME FIGHTING ORGANIZATION. I'M SERIOUS ABOUT FINANCING IT.
A HEADQUARTERS. VEHICLES. SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT.
AND WHO SIGNS THE CHECKS?
MOON KNIGHT OR MARC SPECTOR?
HUH?
YOUR IDENTITY HAS TO BE THE WORST KEPT SECRET IN OUR COMMUNITY.


OKAY, WISE GUY. BUT THE OFFER STILL STANDS.
THINK OF WHAT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS COULD ACCOMPLISH.


I'LL TAKE IT UP WITH THEM.
I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE LEADER, DAREDEVIL.
WE'RE NOT THAT ORGANIZED.


WE DON'T EVEN HAVE A NAME FOR OURSELVES.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, FURY?


I JUST WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT LOYALTIES, NATASHA.
YOU'VE BEEN ON AN UNAUTHORIZED MISSION. AND MIXING WITH SOME BAD COMPANY.
I'M NOT ON ACTIVE DUTY, NICK.


BUT YOU'RE STILL ON THE S.H.I.E.L.D. PAYROLL, HONEY.
THAT GIVES ME THE RIGHT TO BE NOSY. YOU USED TO HONCHO THE AVENGERS, FOR CRIPE'S SAKE.
NOW THIS CROWD?

YOUR BOYFRIEND IN THE RED PEE-JAYS ISN'T SO BAD. BUT FRANK CASTLE'S ANOTHER STORY. THE GUY'S DANGEROUS.
WE'RE NOT ALLIED WITH THE PUNISHER. WE'RE HUNTING HIM.
ONE'S AS BAD AS THE OTHER.
I CAN HANDLE IT.
AND WHEN I RETURN TO ACTIVE DUTY WITH S.H.I.E.L.D. YOU WILL HAVE MY UNDIVIDED ATTENTION, COLONEL.
AND DON'T LET THE DOOR HIT YOU IN THE BACK ON THE WAY OUT.
THAT'S MY WIDOW. NEVER GIVE AN INCH.
WELL, G'NIGHT, LADIES.
YOU'RE A S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT?
THAT'S HOW I PAY THE RENT.
THEY'RE LIKE SPIES AND STUFF?
YES, DAGGER.
MAYBE THEY COULD HELP ME FIND CLOAK THEN.

DAILY BUGLE
YOU TOOK TWO PAPERS.
HUH?
YOU PAID FOR ONE PAPER BUT YOU TOOK TWO.
SO WHAT?
♫♫♫

UNNH!
YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO LIE TO ME, MICKEY.
YOU'RE NUTS. YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO ME.
THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG.
I ASKED YOU A QUESTION AND YOU TELL ME YOU'RE NOT CONNECTED ANYMORE.
BUH -- BUT YOU KILL CONNECTED GUYS.
NOT ONES I HAVE A USE FOR. GIVE ME SOMETHING BIG.

OKAY. SOMETHING BIG. OKAY.
YOU HATE DRUG GUYS, RIGHT? THERE'S A NEW PLAYER.
OVER AT THE PROJECTS NEAR THE MANHATTAN BRIDGE.
THEY CALL HIM DADDY WRONGLEGS. A REAL FREAK.
DESIGNER DRUGS. REAL FREAKY STUFF.
THAT BIG ENOUGH?
GOOD BOY, MICKEY.
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, OKAY?
HEY, HOW ABOUT SOMETHING FOR THE EFFORT?

I KNOW THIS PLACE.
BUILDING C WAS TAKEN OVER BY A HAITIAN MOB A YEAR AGO.
THEY TURNED THE PLACE INTO A FORTRESS.
IF MICKEY FONDOZZI IS RIGHT, THIS WRONGLEGS TOOK IT AWAY FROM THEM.
I COULD USE THE ALTAR BOY AND HIS CREW ON THIS ONE.
BUT THE PLACE IS A GRAVEYARD.
NOT THE JUNKIE SUPERMARKET MICKEY SAYS IT IS.

HE KNOWS BETTER THAN TO SHINE ME ON.
I DO A RECON.
ZERO SECURITY.
NO GUARDS. NO LOOKOUTS. NOT EVEN A SCREAMING BOOM BOX ANYWHERE.
IS THIS DADDY WRONGLEGS THAT CONFIDENT?
OR IS IT SOMETHING ELSE?
I HATE MYSTERIES.

JUNKIES ON THE NOD OR CRACKHEADS SLEEPING IT OFF.
DOZENS OF THEM.
SOARES
BONGO
GRATEFUL DEAD
ROY
BARRIO
ES NUESTRO
MANNING
TOTH
BOYARD
BAD TO THE BONE
MAFIA
BINGO
BULL
COLON
IT'S HARD TO TELL THEY'RE ALIVE. BREATHING SHALLOW.
THEY DON'T EVEN MOVE WHEN I TOUCH THEM.
SOME KIND OF LESIONS OR GROWTHS ON THEM. THEIR BODY TEMPERATURES ARE LOW.
IS THIS A SIDE EFFECT OF SOME NEW DESIGNER DRUG?
THE LAB AND MONEY ROOMS WERE ON THE TENTH FLOOR.
I'M BETTING THEY STILL ARE.
PEACE
ANDREA
YO
CHARLIE
EL DIEGO

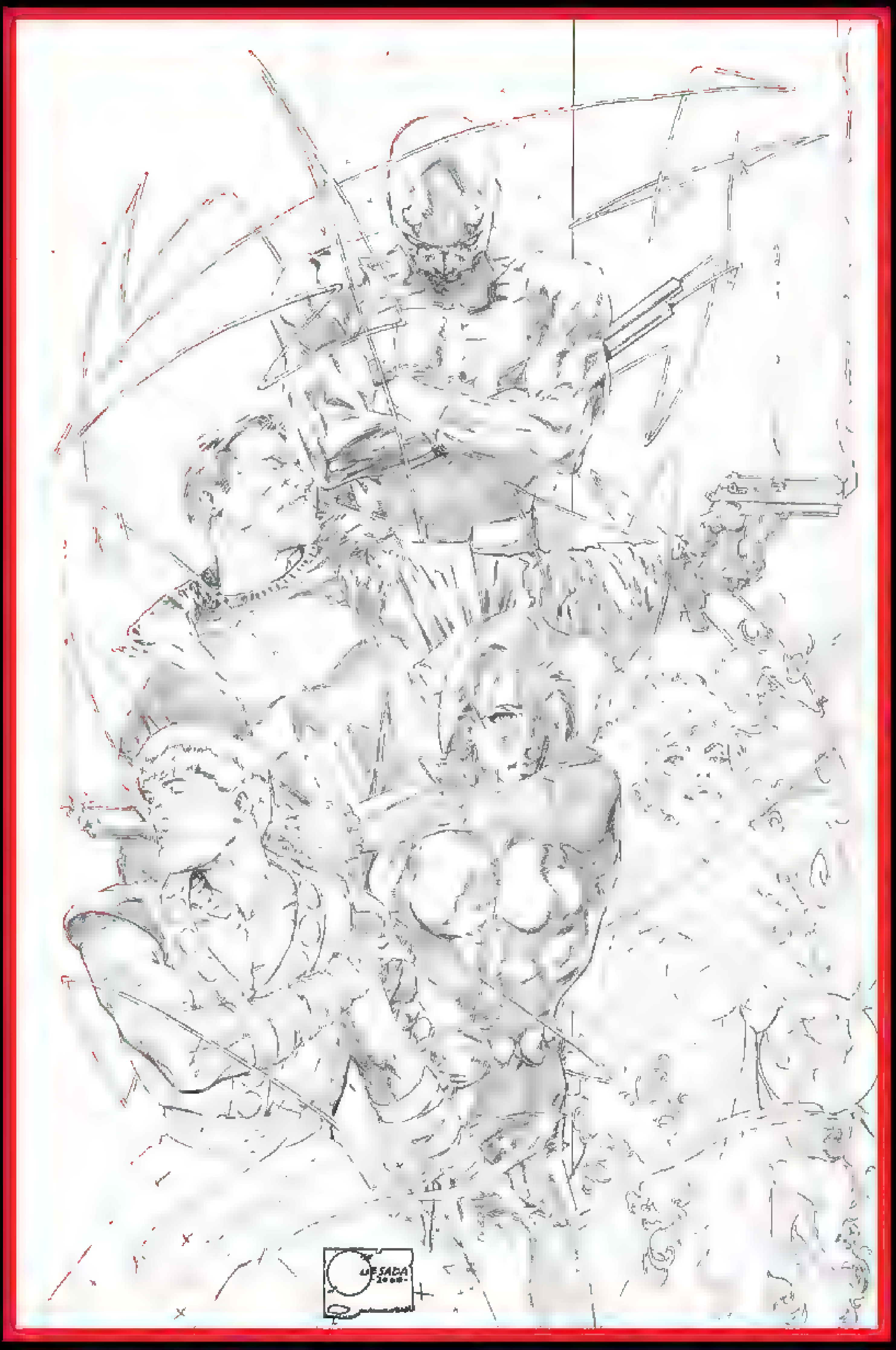
HUNDREDS MORE JUNKIES.
THEY'RE ASLEEP EVERYWHERE. NOT MOVING. BARELY BREATHING.
THE HAITIANS' FORTED-UP COMPOUND.
SOMEBODY TOOK THEM OUT HARD.
MASSIVE FIREFIGHT TOOK PLACE HERE.
LOTS OF CASUALTIES IF THE BLOOD IS ANY PROOF.
STILL NOT A SOUND.
THE HAIRS ON THE BACK OF MY NECK SAY *TRAP*.
BUT THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO LET ME GET THIS FAR.

A HISSING SOUND HERE.
REGULAR AND LOW WITH A HUM TO IT.
I MOVE TOWARD THE LAB.
THE SMELL HERE IS OVERPOWERING. SWEET AND MUSKY.
THE HISS AND HUM ARE LOUDER HERE.
ARE YOU THE GUY THEY CALL DADDY WRONGLEGS?
ANSWER ME.
THE HUM AND HISS ARE COMING FROM HIM.
I LINE UP ON HIS CHEST. ONE TWITCH AND IT'S A CENTER SHOT.
HE TWITCHES ALL RIGHT.
HSSSSSSST
IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES.

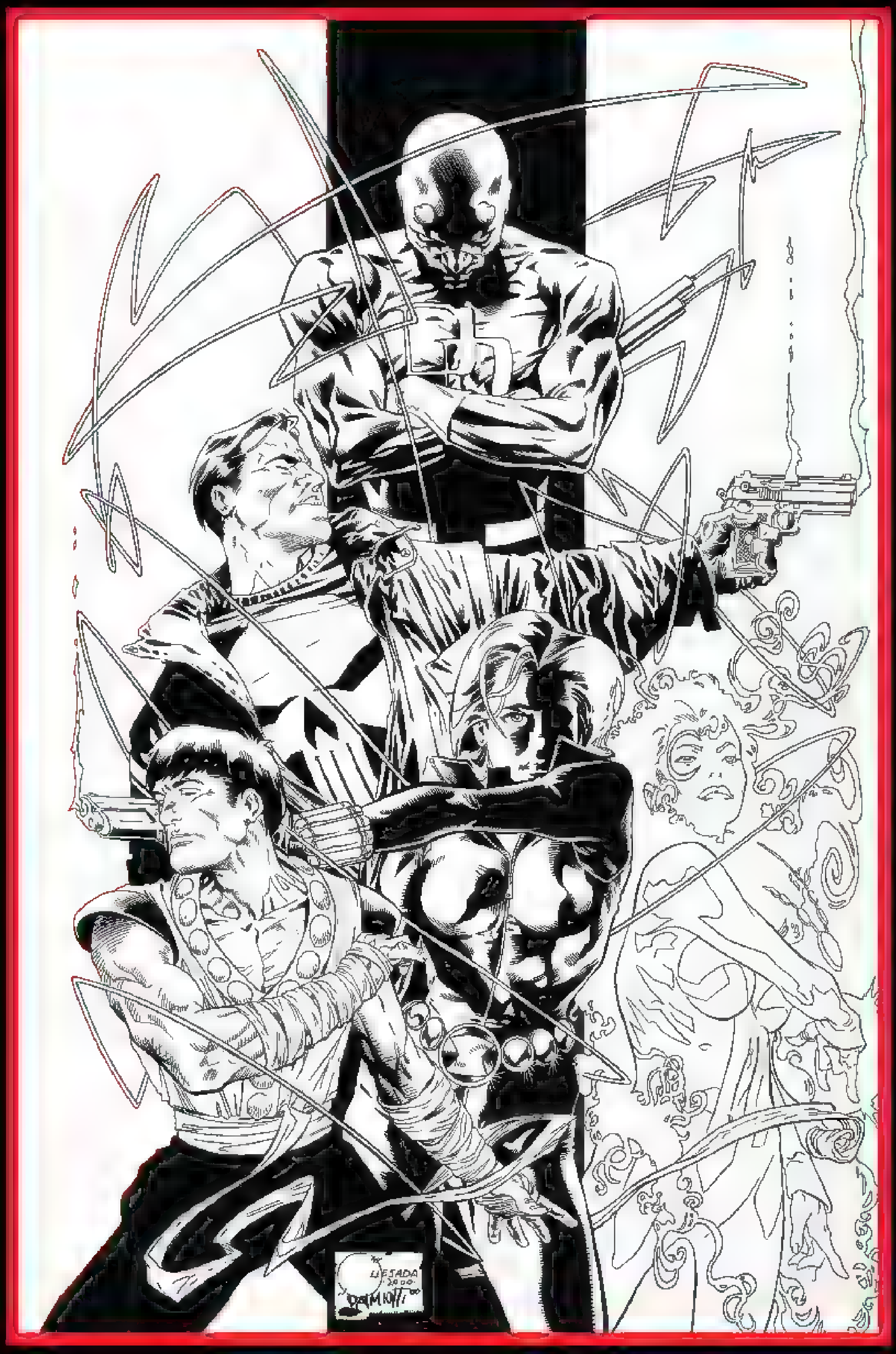
NOW I KNOW HOW HE GOT HIS NAME.
HSSSSSSS
BRRRRRT

Your hospitality and generosity serve only to deepen my shame. I failed to save and protect your daughter.
And so I must leave you as my pain at my failure grows too great to bear.
But know that I carry you in my heart as though you were my own blood.
好
Even more precious than my own blood.
HAVE YOU NEVER SEEN SUCH BRUTALITY?
HAVE YOU NEVER SEEN SUCH CRUELTY?
IF THAT IS SO...

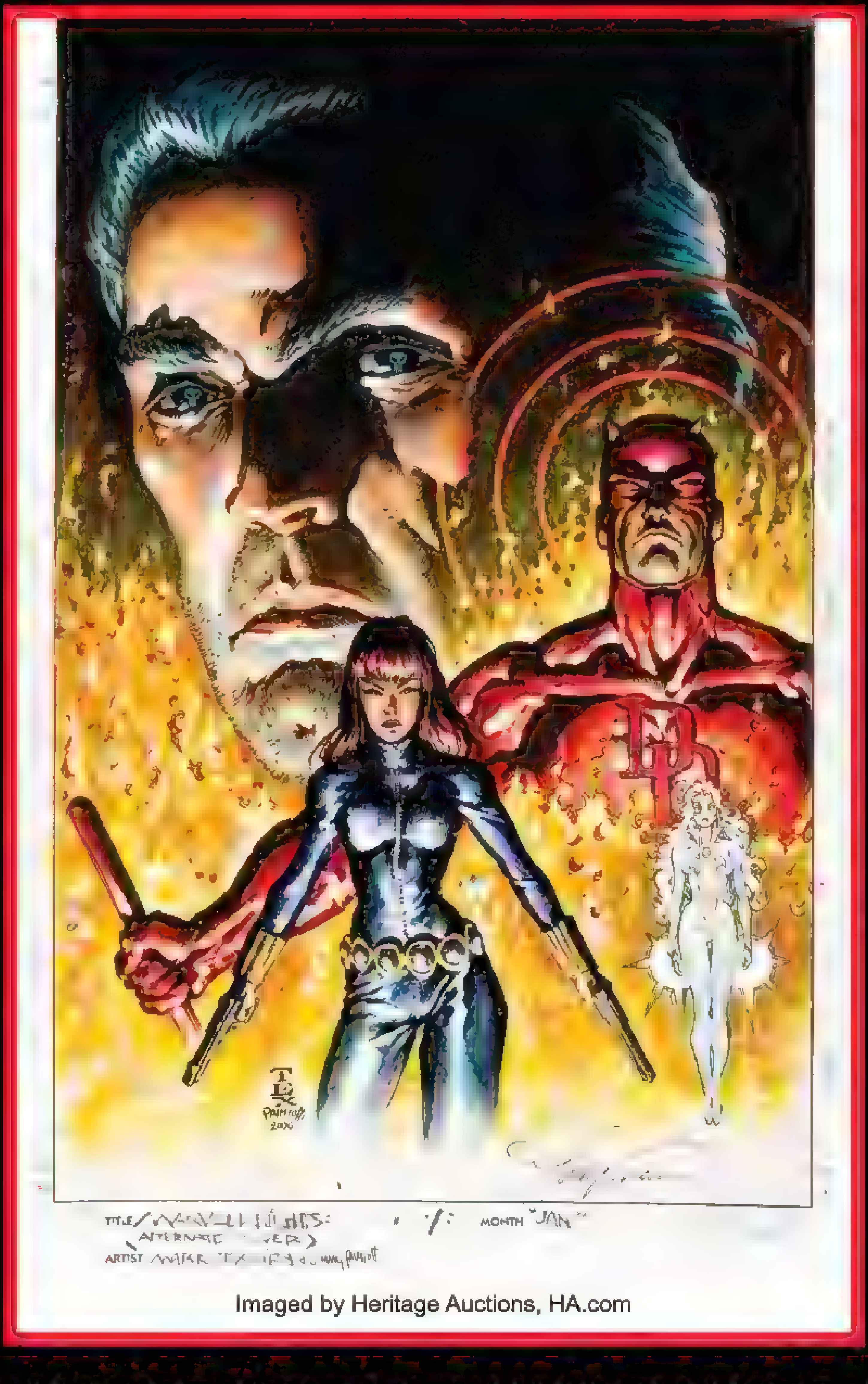
...THEN YOU DO NOT REMEMBER ZARAN THE WEAPONS MASTER.
YOUR FATHER SENDS HIS REGARDS.



**JOE QUESADA**
*Marvel Knights #1* cover pencils



**JIMMY PALMIOTTI**
*Marvel Knights #1* cover inks


TITLE/ MARVEL KNIGHTS:
ALTERNATE COVER)
MONTH "JAN"
ARTIST

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**MARK TEXEIRA & JIMMY PALMIOTTI**
*Marvel Knights #1* variant cover art
Courtesy of HeritageAuctions.com

# 6

IT'S BEEN A LONG *TIME,* SHANG-CHI.
YOUR *FATHER* SENDS HIS BEST.
***ME.***

STAN LEE PRESENTS THE RECKONING
SO, YOU ARE AS SKILLED AS I *REMEMBER.*
SKILLED ENOUGH TO DEFEAT YOU TIME AND TIME AGAIN, WEAPONSMASTER.
THAT IS ALL IN THE *PAST.*
ALL OF YOUR SECRETS ARE *KNOWN* TO ME. ALL OF YOUR STRATEGIES *REVEALED.*
FRIENDS OF YOURS?
THEY HAD TO DIE. THEY WERE GOING TO *WARN* YOU.

THEY WERE INNOCENTS.
GUILT OR INNOCENCE DO NOT *MATTER* --
-- WHEN YOUR FATHER'S *WILL* IS TO BE OBEYED.
WHAT HAS HE PROMISED YOU, ZARAN?
GOLD? WOMEN? POWER?
MY OWN *COUNTRY*, SHANG-CHI.
A *KINGDOM* OF MY OWN.
TO RULE AS *I* SEE FIT.
ALL IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR *HEAD*.
MY FATHER IS A *LIAR*.
HE WILL NOT SURRENDER EVEN AN *ACRE* TO YOU.

SHING
UH?
UNNH!
GUNH!
MOST ADEPT --
MOST DISCIPLINED --
YOU HAVE MORE THAN EARNED THE TITLE AS THE GREATEST LIVING MARTIAL ARTS MASTER.
IT IS MORE THAN ANIMAL FEROCITY, ZARAN.

UNFF!
IT IS MORE THAN RAGE THAT BRINGS VICTORY.
SHANG-CHI! YOUR LIFE IS MINE!
KRIIISH
IS IT HONOR YOU SPEAK OF?
YOU DISHONOR YOUR FATHER WITH EVERY BREATH.
THAT ENDS NOW.

BUSTED IN HERE TO FIND A STREET HUSTLER NAMED DADDY WRONGLEGS.
HIS LEGS ARE WRONG, ALL RIGHT.
BRRRRRRRT
AND THERE'S WAY TOO MANY OF THEM.
POK
HSSSSSST
BIG. ANGRY. BULLETPROOF.
NOT MY FAVORITE COMBINATION.
A 40MM FRAG SHOULD AIR HIM OUT.
THONK
OR NOT.

THIS ROOM'S ABOUT TO GET HOT.
KATONK
KATONK
REMO
KINKED TITANIUM WIRE WRAPPED AROUND A BRICK OF SEMTEX.
IT HAS TO HAVE TAKEN SOME FIGHT OUT OF THE BUG.
BRAAAAMM
HSSSSSST
NO SUCH LUCK.
BRRRRRRT
HAVE TO COVER MY OWN RETREAT.
COME BACK WITH A BIGGER GUN.

I'M THINKING LOW-YIELD NUKE.
I KNOW WHERE I CAN LAY MY HANDS ON ONE.
CHANGE OF PLANS.
MY LINE OF WITHDRAWAL IS CUT OFF.
THOSE JUNKIES WHO WERE SLEEPING IT OFF.
MAYBE THEY'RE MORE THAN ADDICTS.
AND LESS THAN HUMAN.
MORE LIKE SLAVES. OR DRONES.
BRRRRRRT
I MEANT TO DRAW THAT ALTAR BOY DAREDEVIL AND HIS CREW DOWN HERE.

I'M SURE THEY COULD **HACK** THIS ACTION.
IT'S CENTRALLY LOCATED.
TOTAL SECURITY.
I KNOW IT'S NOT MUCH TO **LOOK** AT RIGHT NOW.
BUT YOU CAN **SEE** THE POSSIBILITIES.
YOU MISSED YOUR **CALLING**, SPECTOR. YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN IN REAL ESTATE.
ACTUALLY, I **AM**.
THIS **WOULD** MAKE A GREAT HEADQUARTERS, DAREDEVIL.
I'M NOT **USED** TO THIS. I OPERATE ALONE.
THANKS FOR **THAT**.
**MOSTLY** ALONE. YOU UNDERSTAND, 'TASHA. TOO MANY DISTRACTIONS.

EXCUSE ME, BUT YOU HAVEN'T DONE SO *WELL* ON YOUR OWN.
YOU WANT TO NAIL THE *PUNISHER?* THAT TAKES ORGANIZATION AND EQUIPMENT.
I CAN FINANCE IT ALL. I CAN MAKE THIS A *STATE-OF-THE-SCIENCE* CRIMEFIGHTING CENTER.
THE *WIDOW* KNOWS WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
YOU WORKED WITH *SHIELD*, NATASHA. YOU *KNOW* ABOUT STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.
SWINGING FROM ROOFTOPS AND FISTFIGHTS IN ALLEYS DOESN'T *CUT* IT ANYMORE.
SPECTOR IS RIGHT. HE'S OFFERING US AN OPPORTUNITY.
I'M CONVINCED, 'TASHA. WE'LL UNITE TO BRING DOWN FRANK CASTLE.
AND ONCE HE'S *CAUGHT?*
WE'LL SEE WHAT *HAPPENS*.
WE'RE GONNA BE A *TEAM* NOW?
*YES*, DAGGER.
SO WHAT DO WE *CALL* OURSELVES?

YOU MIGHT HAVE HAD THE *WORLD* -- BUT YOU *BETRAYED* YOUR FATHER!
ALL THAT I DESIRE WAS YOURS BY *BIRTH!*
YOU KNOW --
UNNH!
-- NOTHING!
MY *FATHER* IS THE BETRAYER. HE IS THE *ENEMY* OF EVERY LIVING THING ON THIS PLANET.
AS LONG AS I LIVE --
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE.

THIS IS *CANAL* STREET, NOT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN.
KEEP YOUR HANDS WHERE WE CAN *SEE* THEM.
MOVE SLOW AND NOBODY --
NO!
ARGH!
UK!
FOOL!

WOO
I TIRE OF THIS.
I WILL KILL YOU NOW AND CLAIM MY PRIZE.
THRAKT
OOP.
YOU TAKE MY FATHER AT HIS WORD.
HE WILL KILL YOU RATHER THAN REWARD YOU.
IF YOU BESTED ME THEN HE WOULD FEAR YOU.
AND WHAT HE FEARS HE DESTROYS.
I'LL TAKE THAT CHANCE, SHANG-CHI.

IF I CAN GET TO THE ROOF I CAN MAKE ANOTHER PLAN.
I **HOPE** I CAN MAKE ANOTHER PLAN.
MAYBE SOME FRESH AIR WILL HELP.
FOR NOW I DO WHAT I CAN TO REDUCE THE ODDS.
THESE JUNKIES BLEED **GREEN** NOW.
NOT SURE WHAT THEY ARE. THEY'RE NOT **PEOPLE** ANYMORE.
THE ARMALITE'S EMPTY. FIVE HUNDRED ROUNDS I'VE THROWN AT THESE SUCKERS.
I ONLY HAVE EIGHTEEN ROUNDS OF HARDBALL LEFT.
JACK
REPO

THIS DOOR'S NOT MOVING.
HOUSING AUTHORITY MUST HAVE WELDED IT SHUT.
ADMITANCE
JOE-II
DID IT TO PREVENT ROOF JUMPERS.
FALLING THIRTY STORIES IS LOOKING GOOD ABOUT NOW.
THE COLTS ARE EMPTY.
THERE'S NO WAY OUT OF THIS.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN I GO EASY.

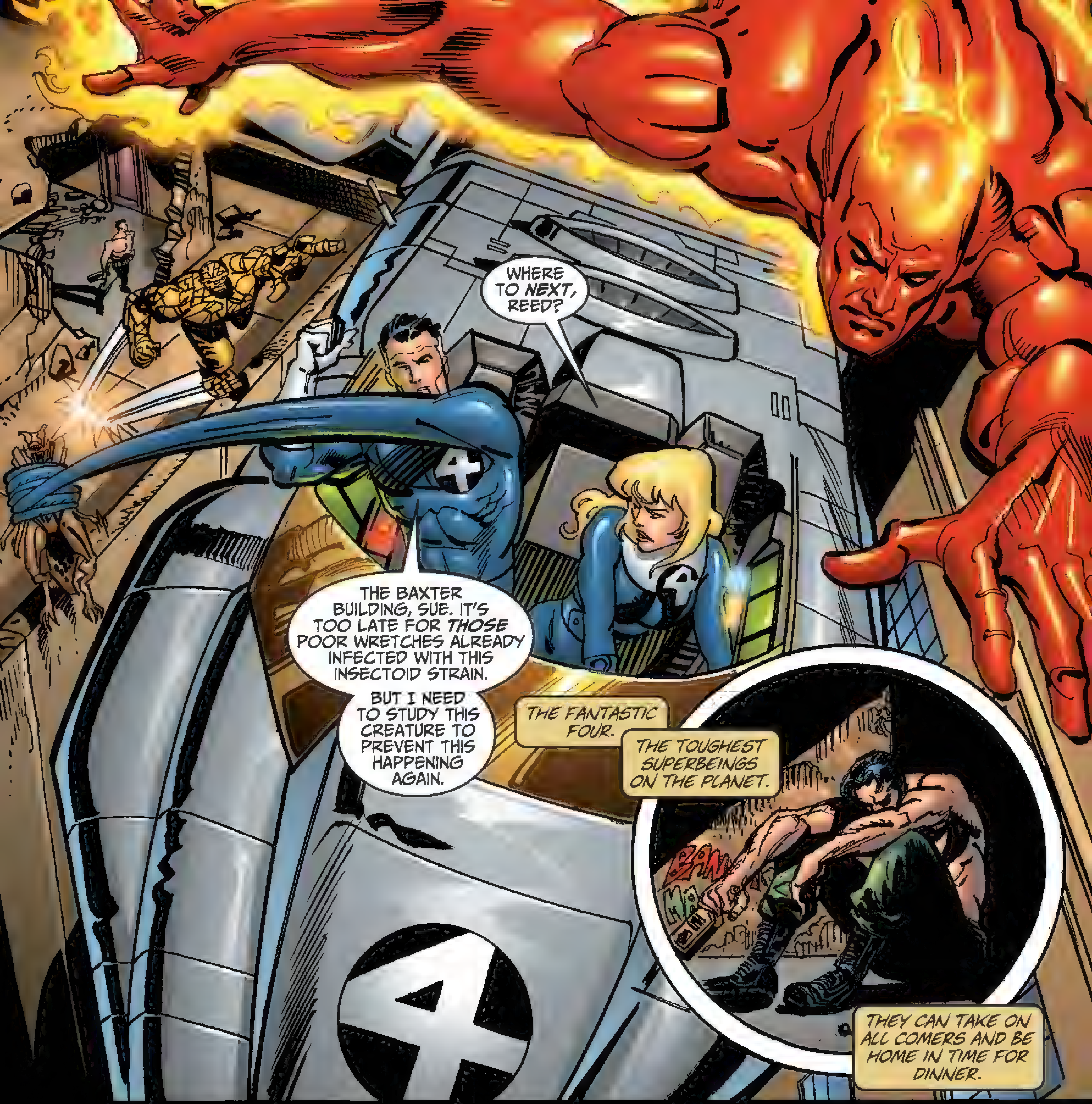
228
FOOD MARK
YOU *CANNOT* STRUGGLE FREE, SHANG-CHI.
228
NEITHER CAN YOU, KILLER.
UH?
SHAKT

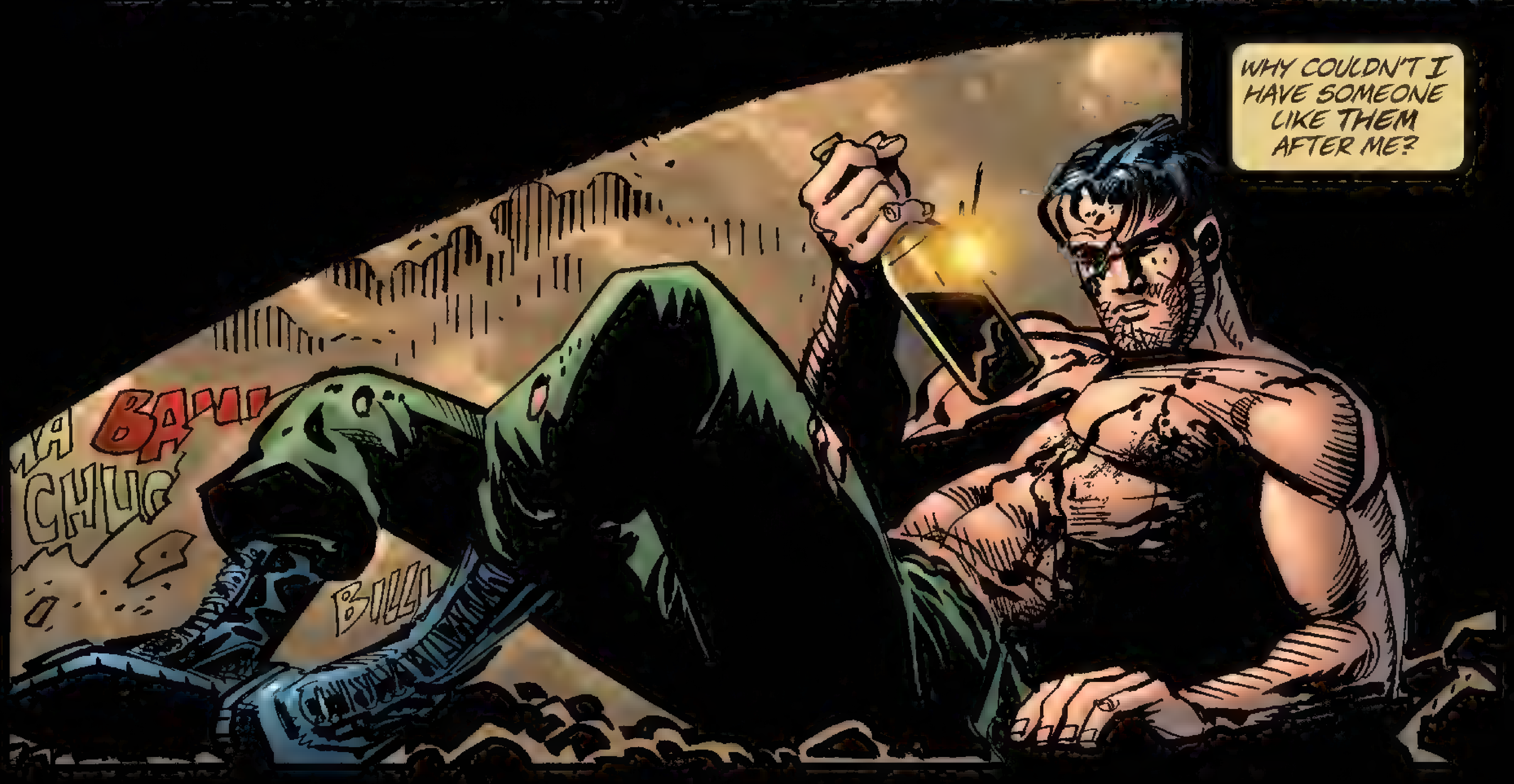
CHNNK
SHANK
NO...
SHIKT
SHAKT
UNH!
SHAKT
WHEN YOU SEE HIM, TELL MY FATHER TO SEND SOMEONE *BETTER* NEXT TIME.
NNNGG...

I PUT A HURT ON THE BUG.
BUT NOT ENOUGH HURT.
UNNH!
LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO KILL ME INSTEAD OF CHANGING ME INTO ONE OF THEM.
HSSSSSST
MY LUCKY DAY.
IT GETS WEIRDER.
SOMETHING STOPS THEM FROM LANDING THE DEATHBLOW.
SOME KIND OF SHIELD. I CAN FEEL IT BUT NOT SEE IT.
UH?

REED WAS *RIGHT. THERE'S* THE RUNAWAY COCKROACH, JOHNNY.
AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S ALREADY GOT A *HIVE* STARTED.
JUST *LIKE* BUGS. THEY *HATE* THE LIGHT.
BRRR! *CREEPY.*
HERE COMES THE *EXTERMINATOR,* BUGFACE.
REED WANTS HIM IN *ONE* PIECE, BEN.
YEAH. YEAH. JUST A *LOVE*TAP, MATCHHEAD.

MAN, CAN'T WAIT TO WASH THIS OFF.
YOU OKAY, PAL?
YEAH. I THINK SO.
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
BUGFACE HERE IS AN ESCAPED CONVICT FROM ANOTHER PLANET. IF YOU CAN BELIEVE THAT.
YOU'RE KIDDING.
PERSONALLY, A ROACH THIS SIZE DOESN'T SURPRISE ME. I LIVED ON YANCY STREET.
WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN HERE, MISTER?
LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO SLEEP. BAD CHOICE, HUH?
WE HEARD GUNFIRE.
I WOULDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT.
YOU OKAY, MISTER? MAYBE WE CAN DROP YOU AT A HOSPITAL.
NAW. I GOT ALL THE MEDICINE I NEED. I JUST NEED A PLACE TO SLEEP.
OUR BUS IS LEAVIN', HOTSHOT. THERE'S LOTS MORE OF THESE BUGS TO FIND.
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, MISTER.
THEY SAVE THE WHOLE WORLD ONCE A WEEK.
AND THEY STILL CAN'T BE BOTHERED TO NOTICE JUST ONE PERSON IN IT.


WHERE TO *NEXT*, REED?
THE BAXTER BUILDING, SUE. IT'S TOO LATE FOR *THOSE* POOR WRETCHES ALREADY INFECTED WITH THIS INSECTOID STRAIN.
BUT I NEED TO STUDY THIS CREATURE TO PREVENT THIS HAPPENING AGAIN.
THE FANTASTIC FOUR.
THE TOUGHEST SUPERBEINGS ON THE PLANET.
THEY CAN TAKE ON ALL COMERS AND BE HOME IN TIME FOR DINNER.


WHY COULDN'T I HAVE SOMEONE LIKE *THEM* AFTER ME?
BAM
CHUG

# 7

"HE LIKES THE DARK STREETS. HE LIKES THE NIGHT.
"HE'S DRAWN TO THE BAD PARTS OF THE CITY."
DOG EAT DOG
EL BARRIO ES NUESTRO
TURK
STAN LEE PRESENTS:
STRANGE
MATTERS

"THAT'S WHERE HE HUNTS.
"BREAK THE LAW. HURT SOMEONE. STEAL OR KILL.
"HE'LL FIND YOU.
"HE HATES DRUG SELLERS THE MOST.
"HE UNCOVERS THEM. HE MAKES THEM DISAPPEAR.
"IT'S REVENGE THAT MAKES HIM DO THESE THINGS.
"BUT MAYBE IT'S MORE THAN THAT.
"IT'S MORE LIKE A HUNGER.
"HE FEEDS ON THE EVIL. IT MAKES HIM STRONGER."

"HE'S OUT OF CONTROL.
"I'M SO AFRAID FOR HIM.
"AND A LITTLE AFRAID OF HIM.
"HE HAS TO BE STOPPED.
"BUT I DON'T WANT HIM HURT.
"HE'S STILL MY FRIEND.
"HIS NAME IS TYRONE."

HE CALLS HIMSELF CLOAK. I NEED TO FIND HIM.
I'M AFRAID OF WHAT HE MIGHT DO.
TYRONE IS SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY. WE HAVE POWERS WE DON'T UNDERSTAND.
I TOLD DAGGER YOU COULD HELP HER. DAREDEVIL RECOMMENDED YOU.
WE'VE EXHAUSTED EVERY OTHER AVENUE; S.H.I.E.L.D. FILES AND MY OWN INFORMANTS.
OUR LAST HOPE IS YOU --
-- DOCTOR STRANGE.
I AM NOT SURPRISED, NATASHA ROMANOV.
YOUR ANCESTORS HAVE LONG CONSULTED MYSTICS.

I SENSE SOMETHING PURE WITHIN YOU, DAGGER.
YOU DRAW YOUR POWER FROM THAT.
YES.
IT'S LIKE A HUNDRED YEARS AGO. TYRONE AND I WERE RUNAWAYS, LIVING ON THE STREET.
UNTIL THEY GOT US AND TOOK US AND DRUGGED US.
"SOME KIND OF EXPERIMENTAL NARCOTICS. THEY WERE LOOKING FOR THE NEXT BIG DESIGNER DRUG.
"THEY DOSED DOZENS OF KIDS JUST LIKE US.
G
"ONLY TYRONE AND I MADE IT OUT ALIVE. AND THE DRUGS DID SOMETHING TO US... TURNED US INTO WHAT WE ARE."

I KNEW SOMEONE ONCE. SHE HAD TALENTS MUCH LIKE YOURS.
THIS CLOAK HAS DIFFERENT, DARKER POWERS. AM I RIGHT?
HE MAKES BAD PEOPLE DISAPPEAR.
TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW OF THIS.
I DON'T KNOW MUCH.
ANYTHING WOULD BE HELPFUL.
"WELL, HE'S DRAWN TO PEOPLE WHO SIN."
WHERE DID THEY GO?
WHERE DID WHO GO?
THE MUTTS WHO RAN IN HERE.
THEY ARE IN A PLACE WHERE THEY CAN HARM NO ONE.

"HE JUDGES THEM.
I DON'T LIKE MYSTERIES. I DON'T LIKE GAMES.
I KNOW THAT.
YOU DO, HUH?
"HE LOOKS IN THEIR SOULS.
YOU CALL YOURSELF THE PUNISHER.
YOU FIND THE WICKED AND KILL THEM.
YOUR HEART BURNS WITH HATRED.
"HE SEES THE STAINS LEFT THERE BY SIN.
YOU WILL KEEP ON KILLING.
NOTHING WILL STOP YOU EXCEPT YOUR OWN DEATH.
"HE DECIDES THEIR FATE."
UNTIL NOW.
UH?

WHAT IS THIS? CALL IT OFF, FREAK!
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!
VRRRRRRRT
YOU CAN'T CALL OFF JUSTICE, FRANK CASTLE.
YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ANYONE.
"THEN THE BAD PEOPLE ARE TAKEN AWAY.
"I DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY GO."
CAN YOU HELP US FIND HIM, DR. STRANGE?
YOUR FRIEND IS A LIVING GATEWAY TO ANOTHER PLANE OF EXISTENCE.
HE IS A DANGER TO ANYONE HE MEETS.

I CAN FIND HIM WITH YOUR HELP, DAGGER.
YOU WON'T HURT HIM, WILL YOU?
I ASSURE YOU, NO HARM WILL COME TO YOUR FRIEND.
I'M ONLY A GUIDE. IF I UNCOVER HIS WHEREABOUTS IT IS YOU WHO MUST CONFRONT HIM.
WE HAVE ALLIES WHO WILL HELP.
YOU MAY NEED ALL OF THEM.
I WANT YOU TO THINK OF YOUR FRIEND.
I DO. ALL THE TIME.
I MEAN I NEED YOU TO CONCENTRATE ON ONLY HIM --
TO THE EXCLUSION OF ALL ELSE.
PICTURE HIM.
BRING HIM TO LIFE IN YOUR MIND.
WHEN YOU HAVE ACHIEVED THAT, THROW ONE OF YOUR MYSTIC DAGGERS TO HIM.
HOW --?
IF YOUR FEELINGS FOR HIM ARE STRONG, IT WILL FIND HIM.
AND I WILL FOLLOW.

I DON'T UNDER...
QUIET, DAGGER.
DO WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED.
RELAX. THINK OF YOUR FRIEND.
THINK OF TYRONE.
PICTURE HIM IN YOUR MIND.
THE ROOM HAS GOTTEN COLDER.
CKOAKO!

KRUNK
SKREEEE!

unnh!
Dagger?
IS HE SLEEPING?
EITHER THAT OR HE DIED ON US.
OH!
I HAVE FOUND HIM.
AND I WAS WRONG.
YOU CANNOT FACE HIM ALONE.
I MUST ACCOMPANY YOU.

"THERE IS A GREATER EVIL THAN I IMAGINED HERE.
THIS GUY LIKES TO COME STRAPPED.
THE SWISS-ARMY PERP. BLADES FOR EVERY OCCASION.
KILLED A MOM AND POP IN A CHINESE BAKERY ON CANAL.
ANYTHING OUT OF HIM, CAM?
JUST HIS NAME. ZARAN. DON'T KNOW IF THAT'S A FIRST OR LAST NAME.
DIDN'T EVEN ASK FOR A LAWYER, BILLY. JUST SITS THERE.
I HATE THE FREAK CASES.
WELL, LET'S START THE PAPERWORK.
"HE'S NOT GOING ANYWHERE."

4359
AND IF MR. ZARAN STILL WON'T TALK TO US?
WE GET HIM BOOKED AND TUCKED IN SAFE AT RYKERS.
AW, MAN.

WE'RE HERE. WHAT NOW?
A LITTLE PATIENCE, DAREDEVIL.
WE'RE JUST LOOKING FOR THIS CLOAK GUY, RIGHT?
IT SEEMS THAT IT IS MORE THAN THAT, MOON KNIGHT.
SHANG-CHI IS RIGHT. CLOAK NO LONGER ADHERES TO THE PHYSICAL LAWS OF THIS WORLD.
BUT WE CAN FIND HIM, RIGHT?
THE EMANATIONS PECULIAR TO HIS POWERS ARE STRONG HERE.
THE EYE OF AGAMOTTO WILL PIERCE THE DARKNESS AND --
HOLD ON, DR. STRANGE --
-- THERE HE IS.
Dagger.
I was expecting you.

TYRONE, IT'S TIME TO COME HOME.
HOME? WHERE IS HOME FOR US, TANDY?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. YOU HAVE TO STOP WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
THE HUNGER THAT MAKES YOU TAKE PEOPLE AWAY -- WE CAN CURE THAT.
CURE?
I AM THE CURE. HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT WE CAME FROM?
OH, TYRONE.
YOU HAVE TO FORGIVE OR YOU'LL DESTROY YOURSELF.
NEVER!

OKAY, WE PLAYED IT HER WAY. NOW YOU DEAL WITH US.
I'VE GOT YOUR BACK, NATASHA.
STOP!
YOU'VE POISONED DAGGER'S MIND AGAINST ME.
YOU NEED A REALITY CHECK, MY FRIEND.
'TASHA! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THIS IS BEYOND OUR ABILITIES TO DEAL WITH.
CHORT POBERI!
TYRONE! PLEASE DON'T!

THAT WAS WEIRD.
ANYONE ELSE SENSE A MOMENT OF VERTIGO?
I'M NOT SURE WHAT HAPPENED.
WE'RE ALONE.
EVERYONE'S GONE. DAGGER, STRANGE, SHANG.
EVEN CLOAK.
NO.
WE'RE THE ONES WHO ARE GONE. WE'RE NOT WHERE WE WERE. THIS IS A DIFFERENT PLACE.
HUH?
DAREDEVIL'S RIGHT. THIS ISN'T 26TH STREET.
MERCY.

BRING THEM BACK!
HA HA HA HA!
OR WHAT? WHAT WILL YOU DO, TANDY?
I'VE GROWN STRONGER.
YOUR DAGGERS CANNOT LIGHT THE DARKNESS WITHIN ME.
I CAN EVEN SWALLOW YOUR BRILLIANCE, DAGGER.
NO!
UH?

STAND DOWN, TYRONE JOHNSON.
YOU PLAY WITH POWERS YOU CAN NEVER UNDERSTAND.
I CAN HELP YOU. OR I CAN CRUSH YOU.
IT IS FOR YOU TO DECIDE.
DON'T HURT HIM! LET ME GO, SHANG!
To STEVE DITKO
THE DOCTOR WILL DO WHAT HE MUST, DAGGER.
THAT CREATURE IS NO LONGER THE FRIEND YOU KNEW.

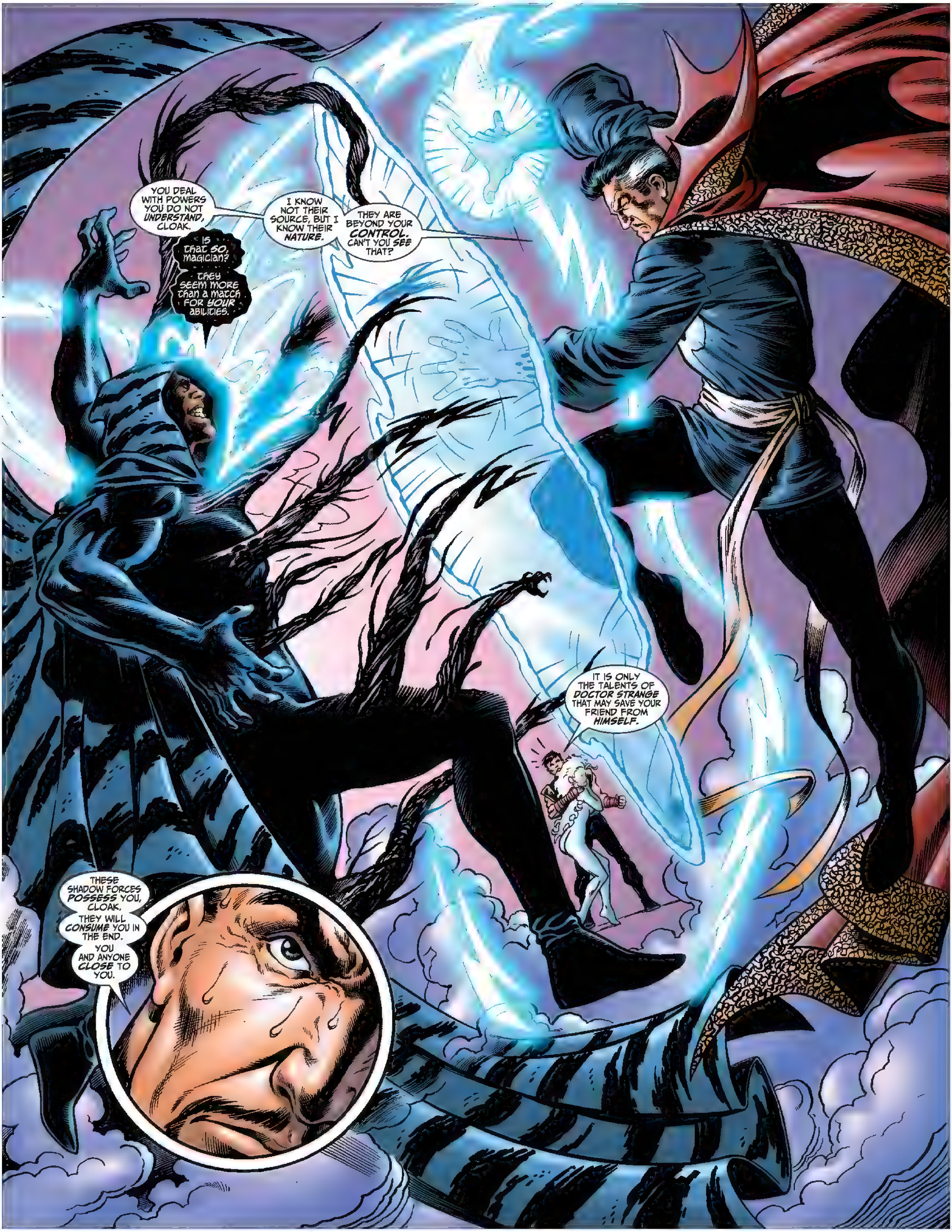
WHAT'S GOING ON?
THE SKY'S ON FIRE. OTHER THAN THAT, JUST ANOTHER NIGHT IN THE CITY.
DAREDEVIL, WHAT'S WRONG?
I CAN'T SEE, TASHA. IT'S MORE THAN MY BLINDNESS.
I CAN'T SENSE ANYTHING AROUND US. IT'S AS THOUGH WE WERE IN AN ENDLESS, FEATURELESS VOID.
BUT THE CITY IS AROUND US. BUILDINGS. STREETS.
NOT ACCORDING TO WHAT I CAN SENSE. NONE OF IT IS HERE.
WE HAVE SOMETHING GOING ON DOWN MADISON.
OH BOY.
WHAT IS IT, TASHA? WHAT DO YOU SEE?
IT'S A MOB.
NOT JUST ANY MOB, PEOPLE.

"THIS CREW LOOKS LIKE IT'S MADE UP OF THE WORST THE CITY HAS TO OFFER."
ALL THE OTHERS THAT CLOAK HAS TAKEN INTO HIS WORLD.
DEAR LORD, THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF THEM.
DAGGER'S BOYFRIEND'S BEEN BUSY ALL RIGHT.
AND I DON'T SEE ONE FRIENDLY FACE.

Quesada 2001
Danny Miki
Dave

# 8

STAN LEE PRESENTS:
DARK MATTERS
TYRONE...
I DIDN'T *WANT* THIS, SHANG-CHI --
I ONLY WANTED TO *HELP* --
YOUR FRIEND IS *BEYOND* ANY HELP YOU OR I MIGHT OFFER.


YOU DEAL WITH POWERS YOU DO NOT *UNDERSTAND*, CLOAK.
IS THAT *SO*, MAGICIAN?
THEY SEEM MORE THAN A MATCH FOR *YOUR* ABILITIES.
I KNOW NOT THEIR SOURCE, BUT I KNOW THEIR *NATURE*.
THEY ARE BEYOND YOUR **CONTROL**. CAN'T YOU *SEE* THAT?
IT IS ONLY THE TALENTS OF ***DOCTOR STRANGE*** THAT MAY SAVE YOUR FRIEND FROM ***HIMSELF***.
THESE SHADOW FORCES ***POSSESS*** YOU, CLOAK.
THEY WILL ***CONSUME*** YOU IN THE END.
YOU AND ANYONE ***CLOSE*** TO YOU.

GUNNNNH! -- WE SEEK ONLY TO SAVE YOU --
-- YOUR ONLY HOPE --
-- IS TO SEE THE *TRUTH* IN WHAT I SAY --
I *CANNOT* STAND BY.
NO, SHANG -- CLOAK IS TOO *DANGEROUS*.
THIS CREATURE WILL *MURDER* DOCTOR STRANGE.
AND HE HOLDS OUR COMRADES *CAPTIVE* WITHIN HIM.
DAREDEVIL, BLACK WIDOW AND MOON KNIGHT *DISAPPEARED* INTO HIS DARKNESS.
STAY BACK, BOTH OF YOU.
THERE IS NOTHING YOU MIGHT DO TO AID ME OR RESCUE THE OTHERS.
HA HA HA HA HA HA!
THERE IS NO HOPE FOR THEM. NO RESCUE.

They are where all who oppose me reside. A place of my creation to imprison the evil of this city.
"A place from which they will never return."
ANY OPTIONS HERE, PEOPLE?
TELL ME WHAT'S HAPPENING, 'TASHA. I'M STILL -- HAVING DIFFICULTIES.
WE'RE SURROUNDED. AN UGLY MOB OF HOODS AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE.
I'M BLIND. REALLY BLIND, 'TASHA.
MY EXTRA SENSES ARE SHUT DOWN OR SHUT OFF.
THEN DO AS I SAY --
-- TO YOUR RIGHT, DAREDEVIL!
GOT HIM!
THE COLOR COMMENTARY'S NICE, WIDOW, BUT WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
SHUT UP AND FOLLOW ME, MOON KNIGHT.

IT'S ME, DARLING.
UH?
I NEED THIS A SECOND.
KRSSSSSSSH
COME ON!
I KNOW THIS STORE.
SALE 99.90
DO YOU?
THIS ISN'T THE MADISON AVENUE I REMEMBER.
JUST FOLLOW ME, DAREDEVIL. WE'LL LOSE THEM IN HERE.
WHAT EXACTLY IS THIS PLACE?
IT'S THE WORLD INSIDE OF TYRONE'S CLOAK.

THIS IS WHERE HE'S BEEN SENDING CRIMINALS ALL THIS TIME.
HIS OWN *PRIVATE* PURGATORY.
SOUNDS LIKE THE *"CITIZENS"* HAVE STOPPED CHASING US.
"THEY MUST HAVE FOUND *EASIER* PREY.
"THEN THIS IS NEW YORK CITY, POPULATED BY THE WORST OF THE *WORST*.
VRSSSSH
VRSSSSH
VRSSSSH
VRSSSSH
"IT'S ALL CHAOS ALL OF THE TIME.
WOOM
WOOM
WOOM
"AND WE'RE THE NEW FISH, THE BOTTOM OF THE FOOD CHAIN."
WHRAAAAM

"I WONDER WHO'S AT THE *TOP*."
WE DON'T REALLY HAVE *TIME* FOR IDLE SPECULATION, MOON KNIGHT.
EXCUSE ME FOR *LIVING*.
BUT I HAVE *ANOTHER* QUESTION.
WHAT'S WITH DAREDEVIL? HE'S ACTING LIKE HE'S *BLIND*.
HE'S DISORIENTED. HE'S NOT *USED* TO THIS SORT OF THING.
WHO *IS*?

LOOK, DAREDEVIL WILL BE *FINE*. HE --
I CAN *SPEAK* FOR MYSELF, 'TASHA.
REALLY?
THEN YOU'RE ON YOUR *OWN*. TRY NOT TO TRIP OVER YOUR STUPID *PRIDE*.
HEY -- IS THERE SOMETHING BETWEEN YOU TWO?
THERE *WAS*. A LONG *TIME* AGO.
DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG *WAY*, FRIEND.
BUT YOU'D *HAVE* TO BE BLIND TO LET SOMEONE LIKE *THAT* GO.
RIP
MIND YOUR OWN *BUSINESS*, MOON KNIGHT.
SOME TEAM SPIRIT *WE'VE* GOT HERE.
PRETTY LADY...
CAN YOU HELP ME, PRETTY LADY?
CAN YOU HELP?
CKOABKO...

PLEASE... PLEASE...
RUMBLING. LIKE THUNDER.
IS THAT A *TRAIN* I HEAR?
NOTHING WRONG WITH YOUR *HEARING,* RED.
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING *NOT* RIGHT ABOUT THIS TRAIN.
I NEVER KNEW THE "E" TO HAVE *TWO* HEADLAMPS.
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING...
NO...
WHAT *IS* IT?
RUMMMMBBBBBBB

GRRRUMMMBBB
I -- I -- I DON'T HAVE THE *WORDS.*
IT'S *BIG,* RED! REALLY, ***REALLY*** *BIG!*
TO: JACK K. & STEVE D.
"AND REALLY, REALLY *UGLY.*"
IT'S A *FREAK* CALL! ISN'T THIS A COLLAR FOR *CODE BLUE?*
IT'S JUST *ONE* CREEP IN A CAPE. WE *GOT* IT.
WELL, THEY'RE NOT *HERE,* ARE THEY?
POLICE
NY
2 92
WEEEEOOOOOO

WE'LL HANDLE THIS.
LET'S SEE YOUR HANDS, PAL! SHOW 'EM!
YOU FOLKS GET CLEAR, OKAY?
POLICE
my hands? you want to see my hands?
as you wish.
YEAH. KEEP 'EM IN PLAIN SIGHT.
THAT'S IT! TAKE HIM DOWN!
BLAM BLAM BLAM
you want to arrest me?
you want to cage me?
2392
you think you're the law?
I'm the law!
I am justice!
I am the final verdict!

SHANG-CHI! NO!
I *HAVE* TO DO SOMETHING!
IF YOU WERE *EVER* HUMAN --
-- IF YOU EVER *CARED* FOR DAGGER --
GUH!
-- THIS MUST END *NOW!*
UF!

UNNH!
That hurt.
Very brave. POINTLESS, but brave.
UNGH!
Compared to my wrath, your skills are nothing!
THERE'S NO STOPPING HIM. HE'S LOSING HIS MIND.
MORE THAN THAT -- HIS SOUL -- HE CAN BE REDEEMED --
WHAT CAN WE DO?
DISTRACT HIM -- I MUST FACE HIS DEMON WITHIN --
SAVE HIM AND -- FIND THE OTHERS --

***CLOAK!***
YOU HAVE TO ***STOP*** THIS! WE'RE TRYING TO ***HELP*** YOU!
EVEN YOU ATTACK ME, TANDY?
IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE YOU ***LISTEN!***
HOW CAN YOU ***TRUST*** THEM -- TRUST ***ANYONE?***
UNNH!
YOUR LIGHT WAS ONCE ***ENOUGH*** TO END MY HUNGER.
NO ***MORE.*** I HAVE ***EMBRACED*** THE DARK. I CRAVE JUSTICE -- I CRAVE ***VENGEANCE.***
DAREDEVIL.
BLACK WIDOW.
MOON KNIGHT.
CAN YOU ***HEAR*** ME?

"OR HAVE YOU BECOME *ONE* WITH THE SHADOWS?"
WHAT *NOW?*
WE GET *OUT* OF HERE.
*TRUST* US, WE'RE *TOAST* IF WE DON'T.
THIS IS *ONE* RUSH HOUR CRUSH WE WON'T SURVIVE.
THIS TYRONE KID'S BEEN *BUSY.*
WE CAN'T JUST KEEP RUNNING. THERE'S TOO MANY.
GET BACK UP TO THE STREET. I'LL DELAY THEM.
*GO!*

WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE HIM!
YOU *HEARD* WHAT HE SAID. IT'S WHAT HE WANTS.
WE'RE ALL DEAD *ANYWAY* UNLESS WE FIND A WAY OUT OF HERE.
I HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, BUT I DON'T THINK THERE *IS* AN EXIT.
YOU SOUND SO *SURE.*
I'M TELLING YOU THAT I DON'T THINK ANY OF THIS IS *REAL.*
THAT'S WHY I'M NOT SENSING ANYTHING.
THERE'S NOTHING *TO* SENSE. NONE OF THIS IS REALLY *HERE.*
I HOPE YOU'RE *RIGHT* ABOUT THAT.
I *PRAY* YOU'RE RIGHT.
1231
MARVEL COMICS
DER MENACE
SPOTLIGHT:
ACT
SURFER RET
DOW JONE
ARTS

YOU WANT REVENGE? AGAINST *WHO?*
THE WICKED. THE UNCARING. ANYONE WHO *HURT* US.
*SOMEONE* MUST PAY FOR WHAT WE'VE BECOME.
BUT WE'VE *HAD* OUR REVENGE, AND IT DIDN'T CHANGE *ANYTHING.*
WE STOPPED BEFORE WE WERE THROUGH.
IT'S NOT JUST THE ANIMALS WHO DRUGGED US AND ALTERED US.
IT'S *DEEPER* THAN THAT. IT'S THE WORLD THAT *BRED* THEM.
SEARCH YOUR *HEART,* TYRONE.
LOOK WAY *INSIDE* AND SEE THAT THIS IS WRONG.
PLEASE...
NO...
YOU'RE SO *NAIVE,* TANDY.
HAHA HA HA HAHA HAHA HA HA HA HA

"THE WORLD IS VENAL. THERE IS NO GOOD IN IT.
"EVERYWHERE WE ARE SURROUNDED BY *ENEMIES*.
"THEY MAY *SMILE* TO GET FROM US WHAT THEY DESIRE.
UNNH!
"BUT IN THE END THEY WILL *TAKE* IT.
"IT'S *SURVIVAL*.
"IT'S LIFE AND DEATH.

"and between the two is pain."
I FEEL LIKE A COWARD, 'TASHA.
WHAT COULD WE HAVE *DONE*, MATT? *SPECTOR* KNEW THE RISKS.
NATASHA ROMANOV?
STRANGE?
IN MY *ASTRAL* FORM.
I *REASONED* YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO SEE AND HEAR ME ON THIS PLANE OF PHANTOMS.
COME WITH ME AND I WILL SHOW YOU THE *TRUTH* OF THIS WORLD.
WE'RE *JUMPING*, DAREDEVIL. CAN YOU FOLLOW MY *VOICE*?
*ANYWHERE*, 'TASHA.
YOU SAID YOU KNEW THE TRUTH?
I *RECOGNIZE* THIS POWER CLOAK HAS.
IT IS NOT HIS *OWN*.
HIS OWN MYSTICAL POWERS ARE *QUITE* PRODIGIOUS.
BUT NOT ENOUGH TO CREATE *THIS*.
DEAR GOD...

THIS PLACE WITHIN IS *NOT* A WORLD OF CLOAK'S CREATION.
IT IS A CONDUIT, A *PATHWAY* TO ANOTHER LARGER UNIVERSE.
THIS DARK VISION OF MANHATTAN IS BUT A *SUBURB* OF THAT UNIVERSE.
WE'RE LOOKING INTO ANOTHER *WORLD?*
A *GATEWAY* THAT GROWS *LARGER* WITH EACH PASSING MOMENT.
AND JUST AS THE EVIL FROM THIS PLANE CONSUMES CLOAK -- SO IT WILL CONSUME THE REALITY WE CALL *HOME.*

"IT IS A UNIVERSE AS VAST AND COMPLEX AS OUR *OWN*.
"WITH ITS OWN *RULES* OF SCIENCE.
"ITS *OWN* LAWS OF PHYSICS.
"IT IS POPULATED BY COUNTLESS *BILLIONS* OF SENTIENT CREATURES.
"AND RULED BY *ONE*.
"IN A COSMOLOGY OF PURE EVIL, HE IS *KING*.
"HE IS CALLED
NIGHTMARE.
"AND HE WAS NOT GIVEN THAT NAME *LIGHTLY*."

# 9

# FINAL MATTERS

WAKE UP, SPECTOR.
I HAD THE WEIRDEST DREAM...
AND IT'S NOT *OVER.*

CASTLE?
I PULLED YOUR BUTT OUT OF THE *FIRE,* MOON KNIGHT.
BUNCH OF GOONS WERE CARRYING YOU OFF DOWN THIRD AVENUE.
YOU DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT WHAT *THEY* HAD PLANNED.
ALL THAT REALLY *HAPPENED?*

I'M AS IN THE DARK AS *YOU* ARE.
I RAN INTO SOME FREAK IN A TEN-ACRE *CAPE* AND I WIND UP HERE...
PRE-*GIULIANI* NEW YORK.
CLOAK.
THIS IS THE WORLD *INSIDE* OF CLOAK'S CAPE. BUT WE DIDN'T KNOW IT'D BE LIKE *THIS.*
"WE"?
DAREDEVIL AND BLACK WIDOW AND I. WE FOUND CLOAK.
*BAM* -- WE'RE IN *WACKY* WORLD.
THEN WE GOT *SEPARATED.*
THE *ALTAR BOY'S* HERE, UH?
BET THIS PLACE TESTS *HIS* HEAD. NO ROOM FOR CRYBABY BLEEDING HEARTS *HERE.*

NEAR AS I CAN FIGURE THIS CITY'S POPULATION IS *EXCLUSIVELY* MADE UP OF HUMAN COCKROACHES.
NOT AN INNOCENT IN *SIGHT.*
WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY *OUT* OF HERE.
*I'M* NOT LEAVING.
I *LIKE* IT HERE.
FREE RANGES OF FIRE AND NO *CIVILIANS* UNDERFOOT.
GREAT FOR A GUY CALLED *THE PUNISHER.* BUT I WANT *OUT.* CAN YOU FIND DAREDEVIL AND NATASHA?
SURE. COME WITH *ME.*
LET'S GO *DOWNTOWN.*

WHAT *IS* IT, 'TASHA? I CAN'T SEE. *REALLY* CAN'T SEE.
IT'S SOME KIND OF *NIGHTMARE,* DAREDEVIL.
IT IS NIGHTMARE BY *NAME,* BLACK WIDOW.
YOUR FRIEND CLOAK SERVES AS A *PORTAL* TO A WORLD OF HORROR BEYOND YOUR ABILITY TO IMAGINE.
WHAT CAN WE DO, DR. STRANGE? HOW DO WE *ESCAPE* THIS PLACE?
FAILING *THAT,* HOW DO WE KEEP THIS *NIGHTMARE* FROM ENTERING *OUR* WORLD?
THERE IS LITTLE FOR US TO DO BUT BEAR *WITNESS.*
"THE REST IS UP TO *DAGGER.*
"IT IS ONLY *HER* RELATIONSHIP TO CLOAK THAT CAN END THIS."
THIS HAS GONE FAR *ENOUGH,* CLOAK.

HAS IT, DAGGER?
I THINK THAT I'M JUST BEGINNING.
I CAN FEEL THE DARKNESS GROWING IN ME. CAN YOU FEEL IT?
YES, AND IT SCARES ME.
YOU NEED PARAMEDICS, PAL? OR IS THAT GUY DEAD?
HE IS PAST ANY HELP WE MIGHT GIVE.
BUT HE YET LIVES. HIS PHYSICAL FORM IN ANY CASE.
JOIN ME IN THE SHADOWS, DAGGER.
CAST ASIDE THE LIGHT AND FALL INTO DARKNESS.
NO...

YOU RELEASE MY FRIENDS FROM YOUR CLOAK! YOU COME INTO THE LIGHT!
IT'S WHERE WE BOTH BELONG!
I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU THIS WAY!
unnh! uuh!
PLEASE, LISTEN TO ME. IT CAN BE LIKE IT WAS BEFORE.
NEVER!
WHO WILL PUNISH THE GUILTY?
WHO WILL CONSIGN THE WICKED TO BLACK OBLIVION?
YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR! YOU'VE LOST THE WAY, CLOAK!

I SERVE JUSTICE! I SERVE VENGEANCE!
THERE IS NO OUTER BOUNDARY TO RETRIBUTION!
THEN YOU DON'T LEAVE ME A CHOICE, CLOAK.
I'LL USE ALL MY POWER AGAINST YOU.
SEE THE ALTAR BOY ANYWHERE, SPECTOR?
NO SIGN, CASTLE.
YOU CHECK A WEATHER REPORT LATELY?
WHY?
'CAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF WEIRDNESS.

SOMETHING FLYING IN THE CENTER, FROM THE EYE OF THE STORM.
***A LOT*** OF SOMETHINGS.
TURN THIS CHOPPER ***AROUND***, CASTLE.
"WE ARE WAY, ***WAY*** OUTGUNNED HERE."

NIGHTMARE'S POWER MOVES NORTH.
OVER THE BATTERY AND HEADING FOR WASHINGTON SQUARE.
WE'D BETTER NOT BE HERE WHEN IT GETS TO MADISON SQUARE PARK.
FOLLOW MY *VOICE*, DARLING.
STRANGE, YOU SAID THAT *DAGGER* WAS OUR ONLY HOPE.
SHE HAS THE MIND OF A *CHILD*.
BOOKSHOP
A CHILD WHOSE TALENTS I AM *UNABLE* TO EXPLAIN.
AND SHE MAKES THEM FELT EVEN IN *THIS* ACCURSED PLANE.
WHAT *IS* IT?
DAGGER IS *PIERCING* THE DARKNESS.
WITHOUT REALIZING IT, SHE'S TRYING TO WEAKEN NIGHTMARE'S *HOLD* ON HER FRIEND.

THERE, TO THE NORTH. THE SOURCE OF THE LIGHT. A DOORWAY BACK TO OUR EXISTENCE.
WE MUST REACH IT. SHOULD IT CLOSE, WE WILL BE *STRANDED* HERE.
AT THE MERCY OF *NIGHTMARE.*
THAT'S *MILES* AWAY. HOW CAN WE REACH IT BEFORE THAT GREEN LIGHT WASHES OVER US?
TIME, SPACE AND REALITY HAVE NO MEANING HERE. THEY ARE *MALLEABLE.*
THEY ARE SUBJECT TO YOUR *WISHES* HERE. AS WELL AS YOUR *FEARS.*
DO YOU MEAN--
OH.
'TASHA?
YOU RELAX AND *I'LL* DRIVE.
*DRIVE?*
*TRUST* ME. WE'RE RUNNING EVERY LIGHT FROM HERE TO YONKERS.

LET'S SEE HOW THEY LIKE SOME HOT TRACERS.
LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN OUTFLY THEM!
I NAILED THAT FREAK ON THE HORSE.
I DON'T THINK HE'S REAL, CASTLE.
UH!
REAL ENOUGH, I GUESS!
HA! HA! HA!
LOSING POWER, SPECTOR!
HYDRAULICS ARE EIGHTY-SIXED!

KEEP HER FROM GOING INTO GYRO, CASTLE!
CYCLICS SHOT. THE ROTORS ARE SEIZING.
WE'RE COMING DOWN HARD, SPECTOR.
HE FLEW THROUGH US.
NOTICED THAT-- UH--
HE CHOPPED THIS RIDE UP WITH A SWORD.
UH-- SAW THAT TOO.
HOLD ON TO SOMETHING.

I DON'T *WANT* TO FIGHT YOU, CLOAK.
UH?
WE'RE FRIENDS. *CLOSER* THAN FRIENDS.
THAT *LIGHT*...CAN'T SEE.
IT COMES RIGHT THROUGH YOUR *EYELIDS*.
IT IS *TRUTH*. IT IS *REDEMPTION*.
ALL WE'VE *BEEN* THROUGH. ALL WE'VE *SURVIVED*.
AND YOU STILL HAVE *LOVE* IN YOUR HEART?
NOW MORE THAN *EVER*.

WE'RE GETTING CLOSER TO THE SOURCE OF THE LIGHT.
OR IT'S GETTING CLOSER TO *US*.
'TASHA, IF THIS ENDS BADLY...
WE'LL *MAKE* IT.
BUT *IF* WE DON'T, I WANT--
IT'S OKAY...
*I* FEEL THE SAME WAY.
DAGGER IS *DISRUPTING* THIS WORLD'S REALITY.
I MUST *REJOIN* MY CORPOREAL FORM.
WE'LL CATCH UP, DOCTOR.
THE LIGHT... I FEEL LIKE IT'S BURNING *THROUGH* ME.
I WISH YOU COULD *SEE* IT, DAREDEVIL.
...I *CAN* SEE IT, 'TASHA.

YOU NEED A *SHOPPING* CART FOR ALL THAT ORDNANCE.
YOU *COULD* CARRY SOME.
I GAVE UP GUNS A LONG TIME AGO, CASTLE.
ALONG WITH YOUR WILL TO *LIVE*.
I'M NOT SURE WHAT'S WITH THAT GLOW COMING FROM OVER *HARLEM*.
WHAT'S *YOUR* STRATEGY?
TO DIE ON MY *FEET*.
THERE'S *THOUSANDS* OF THEM.
AND ALL *DENSELY PACKED* FOR MAXIMUM FIRE EFFECT.
IT'S ALL ABOUT *ANNIHILATION* WITH YOU, ISN'T IT?
MAYBE YOU'D RATHER BE WITH THE ALTAR BOY?
THE TWO OF YOU COULD SLAP THEM WITH YOUR *STICKS*.

UH!
HOLD STILL...
NO!
DON'T --
THANK ME LATER.
SKWEEE!
GUYS LIKE US DON'T GET TO DIE IN BED, I GUESS.
SO, THE ALTAR BOY CAME HERE LOOKING FOR ME, HUH?
NAL BANK OF N
HE'S DUMBER THAN I THOUGHT.

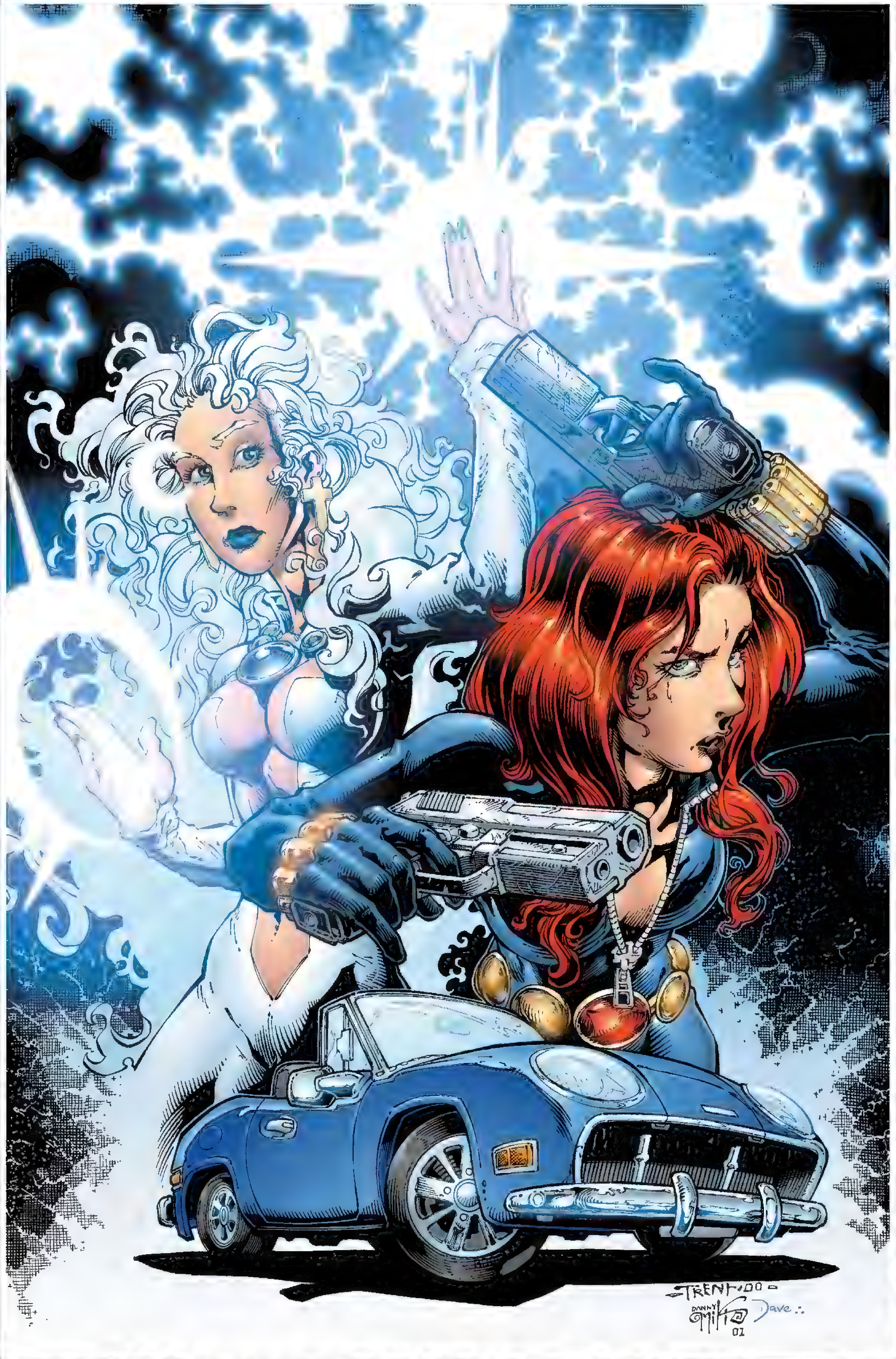
I WILL SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE.
IF OUR *LUCK* HOLDS.
LUCK IS NOT A *FACTOR* HERE.
ONLY *COURAGE.*
WELL, THERE GOES OUR GUARDIAN ANGEL.
I'M NOT *USED* TO THIS. THIS IS SUCH A LONG WAY FROM HELL'S KITCHEN.
YOU'RE NOT ALONE *THERE.*
*NO* ONE COULD GET USED TO THIS.

CKOαBKO!
NICE *KNOWING* YOU, CASTLE.
HM.
SHANG-CHI...
...DAGGER MUST KEEP THE PORTAL OPEN...
OR ELSE *DOOM* YOUR COMRADES.

IT IS...TOO LATE.

I THINK... I THINK WE'RE *HOME.*
TRY TO HIDE YOUR DISAPPOINTMENT.
HERE'S AN UNINTENDED BONUS.
THE ALTAR BOY. ME AND SPECTOR WERE *LOOKING* FOR YOU.
REALLY?
WELL, YOU *FOUND* ME.
UNGH!
THE COPS CAN HAVE HIM.
WASN'T TAKING DOWN THE PUNISHER OUR MAIN REASON FOR *CREATING* THIS GROUP?
I THINK TONIGHT PROVED OTHERWISE, FOLKS.
WE ACTED AS A *TEAM.* WE MET THE THREAT AND WE'RE STILL STANDING.
I SAY WE DON'T LET IT END WITH CASTLE.

"THERE'S *LOTS* OF WORK FOR PEOPLE LIKE US."
IT'S... IT'S...
*TYRONE! IT'S YOU!*
TANDY?
IT'S ME!
OH, I *MISSED* YOU!
SO THAT'S IT? DAGGER "CURED" HIM OF HIS POWERS?
HER LIGHT *DISSIPATED* THE DARKNESS WITHIN HIM.
BUT ONE QUESTION REMAINS...
...WHERE DID THE DARKNESS *GO?*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10

THIS IS HORRIBLE...
IT'S JUST TOO *HORRIBLE.*
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION
THE GOOD WITH THE BAD

YOU DON'T HAVE ANY *CLOTHES,* DAGGER.
I --
ALL YOU HAVE IS THIS AWFUL JACKET AND THE OUTFIT YOU HAVE *ON.*
WELL, NATASHA...
...I'M KINDA... *ATTACHED* TO THIS SUIT.
WE CAN *WORK* WITH THAT...
...YOU CAN WEAR SOMETHING OF *MINE* UNTIL...
UNTIL *WHAT?*
UNTIL WE GO *SHOPPING.*
*COME ON!*
YOU *CANNOT* GO OUT IN PUBLIC LIKE THAT.

WE'RE GOING SHOPPING, TY. WANT TO RIDE ALONG?
NO WAY!
TYRONE?
JOE'S PIZZA
BIG SCREEN TEE-VEE. VIDEO GAMES. ONE HUNDRED MOVIE CHANNELS.
I'VE GOT A LOT OF CATCHING UP TO DO FROM THE TIME I WAS CLOAK.
WE'LL BRING BACK DINNER.
BYE!
UMM... I DON'T ACTUALLY HAVE ANY MONEY, NATASHA.
DON'T WORRY. I HAVE AN EXPENSE ACCOUNT FROM S.H.I.E.L.D.
I THINK SAVING NEW YORK CITY FROM AN ARMY OF DEMONS ENTITLES YOU TO A SHOPPING SPREE.

YOU'VE BEEN SO *NICE*, NATASHA...
...LETTING ME, AND NOW *TYRONE*, STAY AT YOUR PLACE.
DON'T BE *SILLY*, DAGGER. WE'RE *FRIENDS*.
WELL, IF WE'RE FRIENDS AND ALL... COULD YOU CALL ME *TANDY?*
I THINK THAT'LL BE FINE.
DAGGER DOESN'T SUIT YOU IN ANY CASE.
WE'LL *START* ON FIFTH AVENUE AND WORK OUR WAY DOWNTOWN...
...TANDY.
GOLDEN APPLE
JOE'S

"THE STATE OF NEW YORK VERSUS FRANK CASTIGLIONE.
ALSO KNOWN AS FRANK CASTLE.
ALSO KNOWN AS JOHNNY TOWER.
ALSO KNOWN AS FRANCIS STRONGHOLD.
ALSO KNOWN AS FRANKIE VILLA.
ALSO KNOWN AS TED BISHOP.
ALSO KNOWN AS CLIFF CALLADOR.
ALSO KNOWN AS THE *PUNISHER.*
HE IS CHARGED BY THE STATE WITH SIXTEEN COUNTS OF EXTORTION.
FIVE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY VIOLATIONS OF THE SULLIVAN ACT.
TWO HUNDRED AND TWELVE CASES OF AGGRAVATED ASSAULT.
NINETY-SIX CHARGES OF HOMICIDE.
THIRTY-NINE INCIDENTS OF TERRORISTIC THREATS.
POSSESSION OF EXPLOSIVES.
POSSESSION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION.
SIXTY-TWO CHARGES OF...

LOOSEN UP, TANDY.
*THAT'S* NICE.
A BIT *TOO* OUTRE.
*THAT'S* A SALE.
NOW WE SHOP FOR *SHOES!*
Swan du Paris
Swan
BUT WE'VE ALREADY BOUGHT SO MANY CLOTHES!
YOU *HAVE* TO HAVE SHOES TO GO WI --
YEI BOGU!
OH, NO...

MY CAR!
MAYBE IT WAS TOWED.
IMPOSSIBLE! I HAVE DIPLOMATIC PLATES FROM S.H.I.E.L.D. WHOEVER DID THIS...
CALM DOWN, NATASHA,
YOU'RE RIGHT. THE CAR HAS A TRANSMITTER. I CAN FIND ITS CURRENT LOCATION.
THEN WE CALL THE POLICE?
NO...
...BUT WHOEVER TOOK MY CAR WILL WISH I HAD.
TAXI!!
Susan
Susan
Susan
Susan

WHAT THEY CALL YOU, MAN? THE PENALIZER? THE PROSECUTOR?
POLICE
THE PUNISHER, MAN. THE DUDE IS THE PUNISHER.
RIIIIIGHT.
YOU'RE GONNA LOVE RYKERS, PAL.
I WUDDN'T LAY ODDS ON YOUR LIFESPAN OVER THERE.
SO WHY DON'T YOU LET ME GO?
SURE, PAL. AT THE NEXT RED LIGHT.
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
IT'S WORTH FIVE MILLION TO YOU.

THE TRANSMITTER INDICATES A LOCATION IN *WEEHAWKEN.*
I WILL NOT *DRIVE* TO THE WEEHAWKEN.
HNB-6
IS DANGEROUS AND VERY FAR.
I WILL FIND NO *RETURN* FARE IN NEW JERSEY.
*THERE'S* YOUR RETURN FARE.
NOW *SHUT* UP AND HEAD FOR THE TUNNEL, RANI.
OOH.
I HOPE IT'S NO TROUBLE, ME AND TYRONE STAYING AT YOUR PLACE.
DOES TYRONE HAVE A *FAMILY?*
HE NEVER *KNEW* HIS DAD. HIS MOM'S AN *ADDICT*. HE'S BEEN IN AND OUT OF *FOSTER* HOMES.
AND WHAT ABOUT *YOUR* FAMILY, TANDY?
THAT'S AN *OLD* STORY. NOTHING SPECIAL. LET'S JUST SAY I'M NEVER GOING HOME.
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED...
...YOU *ARE* HOME.

WHERE'D *YOU* GET FIVE MILLION BUCKS?
THIS ISN'T THE WAY TO RYKER'S ISLAND, OFFICER.
*SHUT UP!*
ANSWER MY *QUESTION.*
THAT'S HOW I *FINANCED* MY WAR. I *TOOK* FROM THE LICE I KILLED.
USED THEIR MONEY *AGAINST* THEM.
I HAVE STASHES ALL OVER THE FIVE BOROUGHS AND JERSEY.
GUNS, CLOTHES, VEHICLES.
AND CASH.
FIVE MILLION IN UNTRACEABLE DRUG CASH. LET ME GO AND IT'S *YOURS.*
ONE FUNNY MOVE AND YOU WERE SHOT TRYIN' TO *ESCAPE,* CASTLE.
NOW... WHERE'S THIS STASH?

MICKEY'S SALVAGE
I GOTTA GET THESE OUT TONIGHT OR I HAVE TO UNLOAD 'EM ON THE ARABS.
DON'T *"COME ON, FONDOZZI"* ME, YOU MUTT.
FEBRUARY 2000
I SHOULD GIVE YOU A DEAL 'CAUSE YOUR SISTER MARRIED MY *COUSIN?*
HOLD ON, LADIES. I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOUSE.
I DON'T EVEN LIKE MY COUSIN, VIN. WHAT'S THAT --
*MICKEY --?*

WHICH STORAGE BIN, CASTLE?
DEE-SIXTY-THREE.
DON'T *PLAY* US.
ALL I WANT IS TO *SKATE,* OFFICER.
D63
OLICE
IF THERE'S FIVE MILL IN *CASH* IN THERE YOU SKATE.
OR THERE'LL BE AN EMPTY *BUNK* AT RYKERS.
TAP IN THE CODE, CASTLE.
NO WAY, SCOTT! HE MAY HAVE SOME KIND OF TRAP OR A *SIGNAL* OR SOMETHIN'.
SO *WE* TAP THE KEYCODE IN?
WHAT IF *THAT'S* THE TRAP?
MAN...

WHAT *IS* THIS?
YOUR *TRANSMITTER* -- LIKE YOU AXED.
WHERE IS THE *REST* OF THE CAR?
WELL, THAT'S HARD T'SAY...
NATASHA?
WHAT?
LET *ME* TRY AND TO GET HIM TO TELL THE TRUTH.
BLESS ME FATHER 'CAUSE I HAVE SINNED...
...IT'S BEEN TWENTY YEARS SINCE MY LAST CONFESSION...
SIT DOWN, TANDY.
WE'RE GOING TO BE HERE FOR A *WHILE.*

NINE.
TWO.
FIVE.
THERE. UNLOCKED. AND NOTHIN' *HAPPENED.*
LUCKY FOR *YOU,* CASTLE.
WHAT YOU *DOIN'?*
HE'S GONNA OPEN THE DOOR.
DON'CHOO THINK HE *THOUGHTA* THAT?
WHAT?
HE OPENS THE DOOR AND SETS *OFF* A TRAP?
YEAH... RIGHT...
MAN...
DECISIONS... DECISIONS.
POL

AND THEN I SOLD MY MOM'S ENGAGEMENT RING.
I TOL' HER IT GOT *STOLEN.* AND THEN I --
*MY CAR!*
WHERE'S MY *CAR?*
OH YEAH...
...SOON'S I PUT IT UP ON THE COMPUTER, SOME GUY CONTACTED ME AND SAID HE WANTED IT.
MOE TAMPA. HE OWNS A BAR OVER ON WILLET AND GRAND IN THE CITY.
WATCH YOURSELF. HE'S DANGEROUS.
SO AM *I.*
WILLET AND GRAND, RANI.
THOSE DAGGERS OF YOURS, HOW LONG DOES THAT EFFECT LAST?
FOREVER... I *THINK.*

THE HECK WITH THIS!
HUH?
THIS GUY AIN'T SO SMART. LOOKIT 'IM!
WE OPEN THE DOOR. HE OPENS THE DOOR.
THERE'S FIVE MILLION TAX-FREE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS DOOR.
I SAY WE JUST GET IT.
AND IF IT AIN'T THERE IT'S HIS HIDE!
WE CAP 'IM AND BURY HIM OUT ON STATEN LIKE OTHERS.
UH... DOOR'S RUSTY.
TWO POINT FIVE MILL APIECE, SCOTT.
WE BETTER START THINKIN' OF OUR STORY, JER'. FOR LETTIN' HIM GO.
WHO SAYS WE'RE LETTIN' HIM GO?
LICE
JER'...

NORMALLY I DON'T KILL LAWMEN.
CLEAN LAWMEN.
THESE TWO SHOULD NEVER HAVE WORN A BADGE.
A PAIR OF MURDERERS IN BLUE.
ROBOTIC .50 CALIBER MACHINE GUN WIRED WITH MOTION SENSORS AND PHOTO-SENSITIVE ACTIVATOR.
BUILD A BETTER MOUSETRAP...
I NEVER LIED TO THEM. NOT ABOUT THE CASH.
FIVE MILLION IN BUNDLES OF WORN TWENTIES.
IN SITUATIONS LIKE THESE...
...HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.

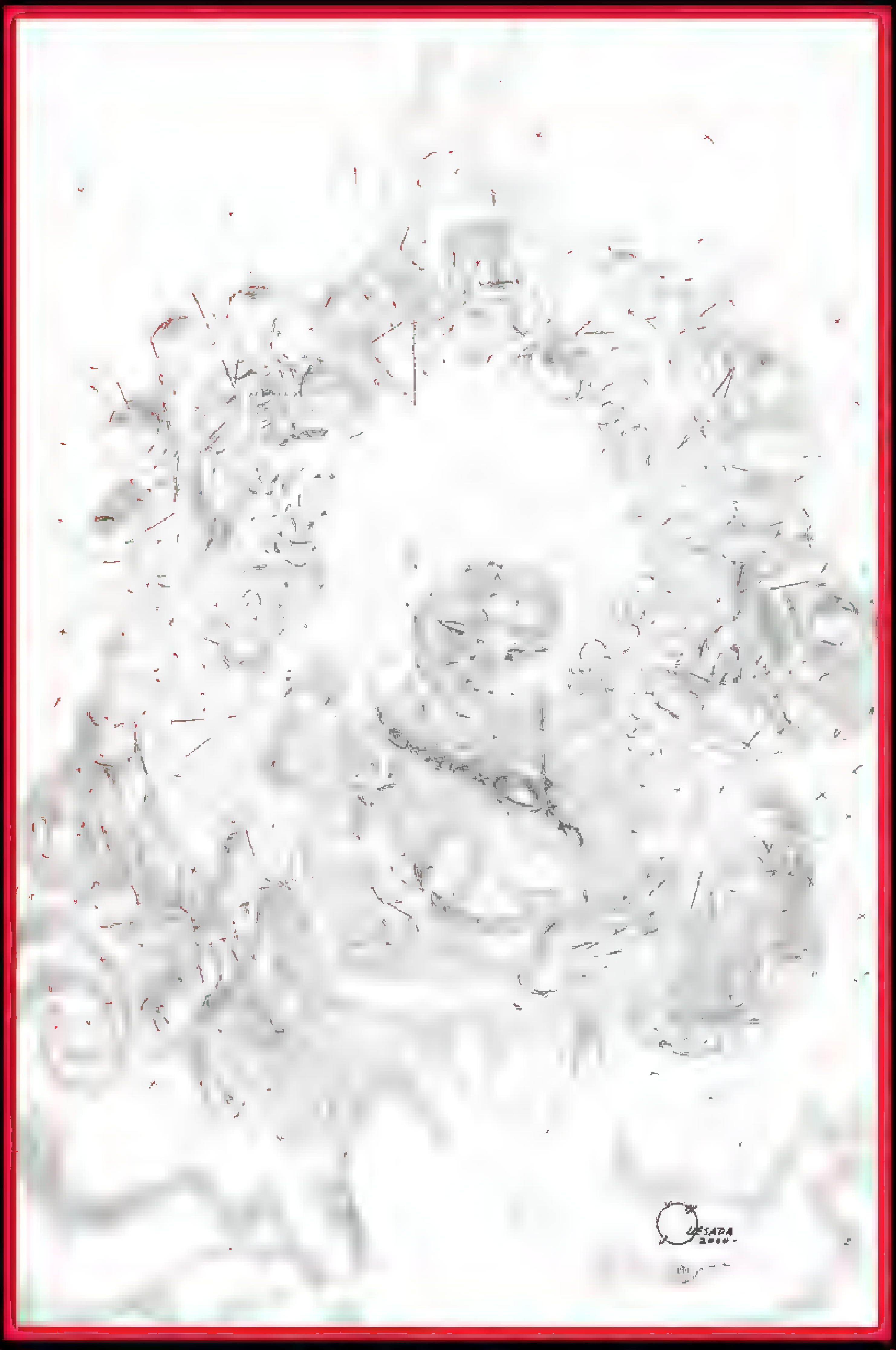
I AM NOT *LIKING* THIS NEIGHBORHOOD EITHER.
*THIS* MAKE IT BETTER?
A *LITTLE,* YES.
WAIT HERE.
I DON'T *SEE* YOUR CAR, NATASHA.
MAYBE MICKEY *LIED.*
HE *CAN'T.* HIS SOUL IS *PURE* NOW.
EITHER MY CAR IS ON A BOAT TO *AFRICA...*
...OR IT'S IN A LOCATION MY PROXIMITY CONTROLS CAN'T REACH.
WE'LL ASK REAL NICE. AT *FIRST.*
STICK *CLOSE* TO ME, TANDY.
TAMPA
THIS PLACE IS A *FRONT.* AND THOSE GUYS AT THE BAR *AREN'T* CUSTOMERS.
HOW DO YOU --
I JUST *DO.*

ARE YOU *MOE?*
WHA'CHOO *WANT?*
YOU BOUGHT A *CAR* TODAY FROM MICKEY FONDOZZI. WHERE IS IT?
SO YOU'RE *NOT* STRIPPERS.
BUT YOU SURE AIN'T *COPS.*
I'M THE *OWNER.*
HOW CAN I GET MY WHEELS BACK *WITHOUT* VIOLENCE?
I DUNNO.
MAYBE YOU AN' YOUR GIRLFRIEND CAN *WORK* IT OFF DANCIN'.
OH, WE COULD DANCE.
WE *COULD?*

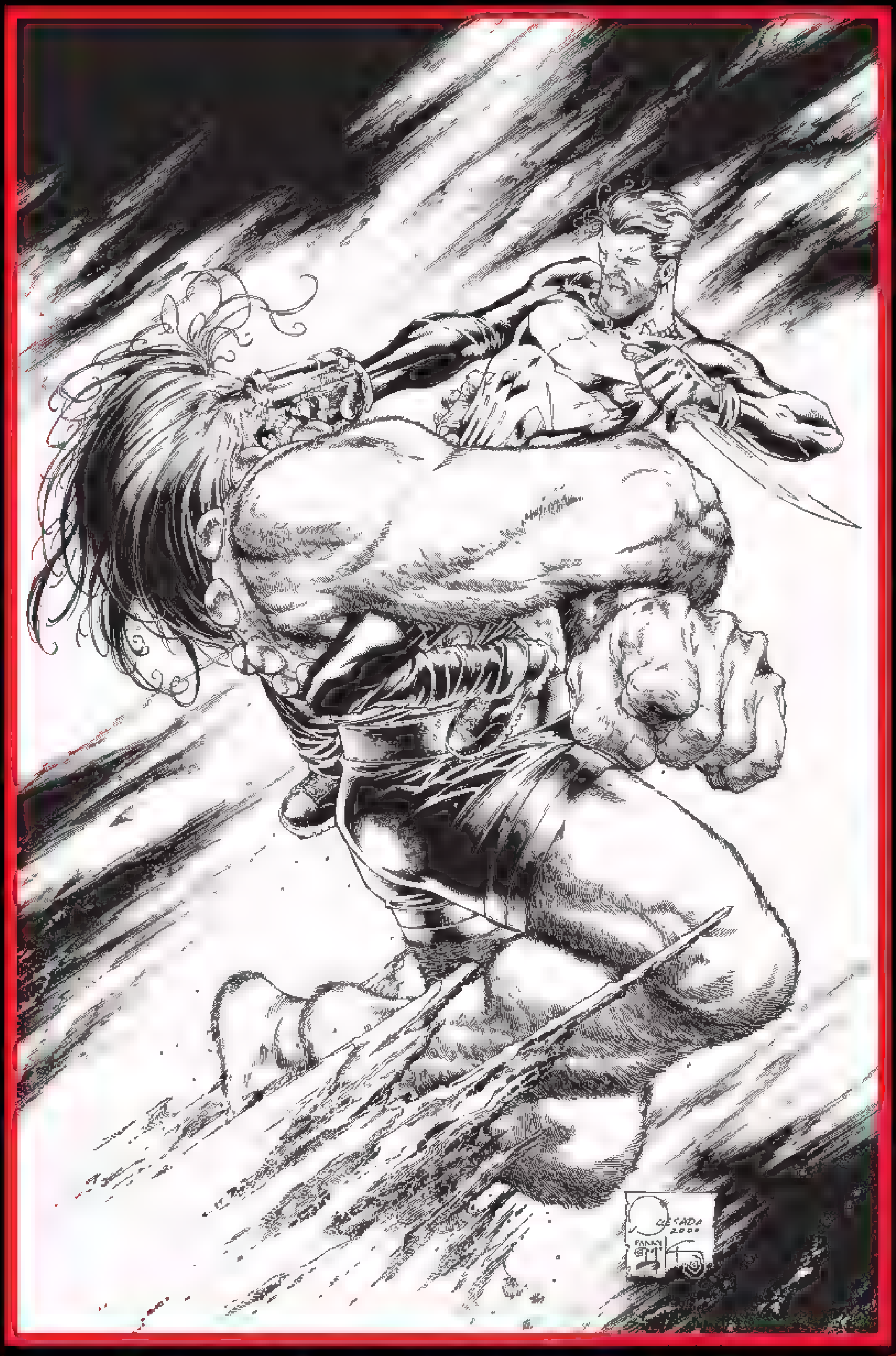
DAGGER! FOLLOW ME!

WHICH WAY?
THERE!
PARKING
NATASHA! HE'S GETTING AWAY!
NO HE'S NOT. HE'S OUT IN THE OPEN.
"AND HE'S MINE."
UHN?

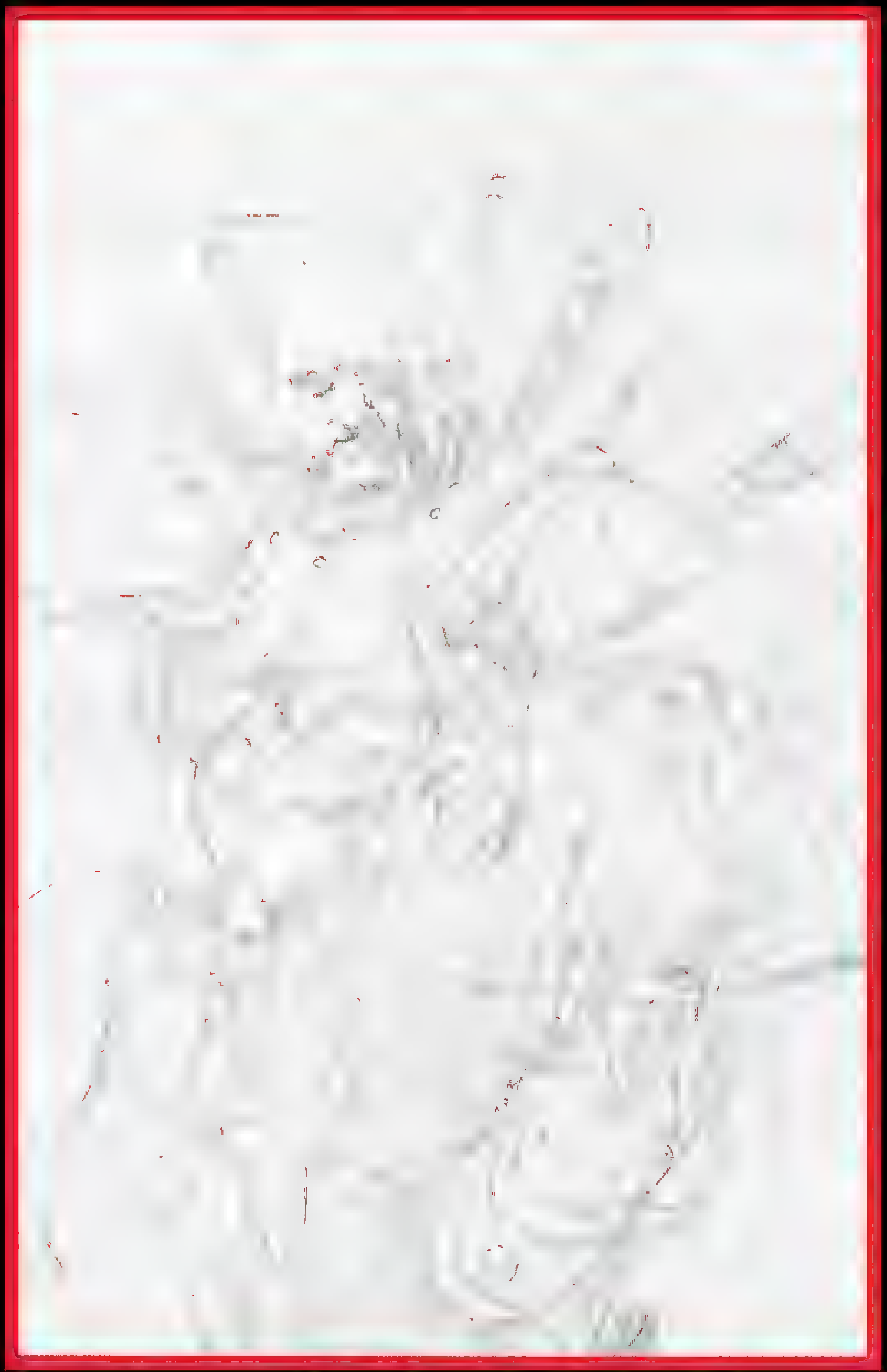
I DIDN'T KNOW IT *DID* THAT.
STANDARD *S.H.I.E.L.D.* OPTION.
*WULP!*
OUT OF MY CAR, *DUBINA.*
RANI, FOLLOW US TO MY PLACE.
OUR BAGS WON'T FIT IN THE TRUNK OF MY CAR *ANYWAY.*



**JOE QUESADA**
*Marvel Knights #2 cover pencils*



**JOE QUESADA & DANNY MIKI**
*Marvel Knights #3 cover art*



**JOE QUESADA**
*Marvel Knights #4 cover pencils*

Trent '00
Danny Miki

# 11

*LOOK* WHAT YOU GONE AND DONE.
I HAVE TO GET THESE SHIRTS *TAILOR-MADE*.
COST ME A *FORTUNE*.

STAN LEE PRESENTS:
HERO FOR HIRE
ALL THAT UPS MY *EXPENSES.*
NO PROFIT MARGIN ON *THIS* JOB.
YOU MUTTS ARE AFFECTIN' MY BOTTOM *LINE.*
NEW YORK
NOW, YOU GUYS WANNA STAY *OUT* OF THIS NEIGHBORHOOD?
*UHHH...*
*NOD* IF YOU CAN'T TALK, SUCKER.
UH... HUH...
THAT'S RIGHT... *THAT'S* RIGHT.
PIZZA

CROSS THE BRIDGE FROM JERSEY AGAIN AND I'LL HAVE TO GET *ROUGH* ON YOU.
SERBIAN GANGSTAS. *HUNH.* WHO EVER HEARD OF *SERBIAN* MAFIA?
*EXCELLENT* WORK, MR. CAGE. THOSE MEN WON'T BOTHER *US* AGAIN.
THE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION HAS DECIDED YOU DESERVE A *BONUS.*
WE *DOUBLED* YOUR FEE.
A *CHECK?*
WORTH *EVERY* PENNY.
AND CHEAPER THAN THE PROTECTION MONEY *THEY* WANTED.
A CHECK.
CAN'T TAKE THE *SUBWAY* WITH A CHECK.
AND NO CAB'S GONNA PICK *ME* UP AT THIS HOUR EVEN IF I *WASN'T* WEARIN' THESE RAGGEDY CLOTHES.
LOOKS LIKE I WALK BACK TO HARLEM.
OR YOU COULD *FLY.*
WHO --?

YOUR SECRETARY SAID I'D FIND YOU HERE.
HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN A WHILE, MOON KNIGHT.
TIMES THAT TOUGH IN THE HERO BUSINESS, LUKE?
WISH I HAD BULLETPROOF CLOTHES TO GO WITH MY BULLETPROOF SKIN.
SPEAKING AS A GUY WHO HAS ONE BUT NOT THE OTHER --
-- I'D BE HAPPIER WITH THE BULLETPROOF SKIN.
GOT A POINT THERE.
WHAT BRINGS YOU DOWNTOWN?
I MIGHT HAVE A JOB FOR YOU --
-- A PERMANENT POSITION. I'LL GIVE YOU A LIFT HOME WHILE WE TALK ABOUT IT.
YOU'D BETTER JUST DROP ME AT 110TH STREET.
GUYS IN WHITE HOODS AREN'T EXACTLY WELCOME IN HARLEM.

MAYLAY TRADING COMPANY
ZARAN...
CADE
THE MASTER IS *MOST* DISPLEASED, ZARAN.
YOU FAIL TO KILL HIS SON AND THEN YOU *FLEE*.
THE *POLICE* GRABBED ME.
THE MASTER MADE THE TERMS OF HIS ASSIGNMENT *CLEAR* TO YOU.
YOU *FAILED*. NOW YOU MUST PAY THE *ULTIMATE* PRICE.
ZINGH, REMOVE HIS *HEAD*.

AND YOU HOPE TO STOP ZINGH WITH THAT?
MAYLAY TRADING COMPA
KRIIIIIISH
YOU THOUGHT ME UNARMED. THE MASTER SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU...
...THAT ANY OBJECT IS DEADLY IN THE HANDS OF ZARAN.
OFF!
NOW, COME AND DIE.

I DON'T *KNOW* ABOUT THIS...
WHAT'S NOT TO *LIKE?*
MOON KNIGHT WENT TO A *LOT* OF EXPENSE AND TROUBLE TO SET UP THIS HEADQUARTERS FOR US, DAREDEVIL.
I'M USED TO OPERATING ON THE *STREETS,* NATASHA.
LOOK AT THE *THREATS* WE'VE BEEN FACING LATELY. THE CITY'S CHANGED. IT'S *NOT* JUST GANGSTERS AND MUGGERS ANYMORE.
WE'RE THE LAST VIGILANTES *NOT* AFFILIATED WITH A TEAM. WE *NEED* THE STRENGTH IN NUMBERS.
LOOK BUT DON'T *TOUCH,* DAGGER.
OH... KAY.
IT JUST SEEMS TO ME THAT HAVING A *PERMANENT* ADDRESS LEAVES YOU OPEN TO ATTACK.
WELL, HERE'S COMES SPECTOR NOW. TELL *HIM* YOUR CONCERNS.

GLAD EVERYONE'S HERE. I THINK YOU ALL KNOW LUKE CAGE.
WE HAVE NOT MET. I KNOW OF HIM ONLY BY REPUTATION.
I AM SHANG-CHI.
DANNY RAND USED TO TALK ABOUT YOU. SAID YOU WERE THE BEST.
THAT IS PRAISE INDEED FROM THE MAN CALLED IRON FIST.
I INVITED LUKE TO JOIN US. WE COULD USE A HEAVYWEIGHT CONSIDERING THE CREEPS WE'VE BEEN UP AGAINST.
GLAD TO BE ON THE PAYROLL.
YOU HIRED HIM?
YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT? I'M "FOR HIRE." SAYS SO ON MY BUSINESS CARD.
THE REST OF US ARE HERE BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN WHAT WE'RE DOING.
THE REST OF YOU HAVE DAY JOBS, RED. THIS IS HOW I PAY THE RENT.
I FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT. WHAT'S WRONG IF I MAKE A BUCK DOIN' IT?
YOU'LL GET YOUR MONEY'S WORTH.

"AND THAT'S A CASH-BACK GUARANTEE."
UNH! UH.
THIS BECOMES TIRESOME.
FINISH HIM, ZINGH.
UH?
UNNNF!
AN ERROR IN TACTICS, ZINGH.
YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE DONE THAT. THIS MAY SEEM LIKE A SIMPLE SHOP WITH GOODS OF QUESTIONABLE VALUE...

"...TO ZARAN IT IS AN *ARSENAL*."
THE LITTLE ONE IS *RIGHT*.
YOU WILL BE ALLOWED ONLY *ONE* MISTAKE.
ARR!
UH!
AK!
NOW YOU JOIN THE *DEAD* WHO HAVE MET ZARAN IN COMBAT.
BRAINLESS *SLAVE*.
IS *THIS* THE BEST THAT --
AHRRRRRRR!
ZAAASP
HEE HEE.

NOT HIM.
NONE OF 'EM WERE THAT SKINNY.
OR THAT FAT.
THAT'S ONE OF 'EM. HE WAS THERE.
HE ANYONE IMPORTANT?
LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT HIS FILE.
NO NEED, MOON KNIGHT. I KNOW HIM.
VIKTOR SMERDILOVISC.
WANTED WAR CRIMINAL. AS PART OF BLACK MARIA, A SERB DEATHSQUAD, HE WAS A PART OF TORTURE AND MURDER.
HERE HE HIDES UNDER OUR NOSES.
AND I SENT HIM BACK TO WEEHAWKEN.
DO YOU KNOW WHERE?
NO, WIDOW.
BUT I CAN FIND OUT.

FINISH ME THEN.
NOT YET, ZARAN. MY ORDERS ARE EXPLICIT.
THE MASTER WOULD HAVE A FINAL WORD WITH YOU.
THE MASTER... HERE?
HE IS EVERYWHERE.
IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER.
THIS IS THE PRICE OF FAILURE, ZARAN.
YOU PROMISED MY SON'S DEATH OR YOUR OWN.
MASTER...
HOWEVER, AT THE RISK OF BEING THOUGHT MERCIFUL, I WOULD OFFER YOU ANOTHER CHANCE.
WOULD YOU CHALLENGE SHANG-CHI A SECOND TIME?
A SECOND TIME, A THOUSANDTH TIME.
HIS LIFE IS YOURS, MASTER. I WILL MAKE HIS DEATH A TRIBUTE TO YOUR NAME.
THEN HUNT HIM, ZARAN...
...AND SLAY ANY WHO STAND IN YOUR WAY.

ST. ANSCOM'S IN BROOKLYN.
THE MOOK I'M LOOKING FOR THINKS HE'S FOUND SANCTUARY.
NOBODY HIDES FROM ME.
NOT EVEN BEHIND A CROSS.
...LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION...
MICKEY.
UH?
I ASKED AROUND. EVERYONE TELLS ME YOU SPEND MOST OF YOUR TIME *HERE*.
JUST *LATELY*.
YOU *HIDING* FROM ME, MICKEY?

I AIN'T HIDIN' FROM **NOBODY**. NOT ANYMORE.
THAT SO?
THERE'S THIS GIRL...
YOU'RE IN **LOVE**, MICKEY?
HE'S NOT LYING.
IT'S NOT **LIKE** THAT. SHE'S AN **ANGEL**. ALL IN **WHITE**.
SHE CLEANED MY **SOUL**. I DON'T **DO** CRIME NO MORE.
THEN YOU'RE NO GOOD TO ME.
YEAH. I GUESS NOT.
EXCUSE ME. I GOT A **NOVENA** TO FINISH.
SO MICKEY FONDOZZI'S FOUND RELIGION.
YOU CAN'T EVEN TRUST A SNITCH ANY MORE.

THIS PLACE ISN'T IN ZAGAT'S GUIDE.
MAYBE WE GOT HERE ON THE RIGHT NIGHT. THIS COULD BE A MEETING OF SOME KIND.
CLUB CLOSCO
WE MIGHT BAG MORE THAN JUST THIS MASS MURDERER.
ONLY YOU WOULD SEE MORE THUGS AS A GOOD THING.
NOT SURE I LIKE THIS. ANYONE COULD BE IN THERE.
MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO HIRE MORE MUSCLE, SPECTOR?
CANCER
DAREDEVIL...
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?
I DON'T CARE FOR THE IDEA OF MERCENARIES, CAGE.
I WAS A MERCENARY.
"WAS."
MAN...

THIS IS ABOUT A COMMITMENT TO *JUSTICE*. NOT ABOUT A *PROFIT* MARGIN.
WHAT ABOUT *COPS?* THEY'RE *PAID* TO SERVE JUSTICE.
YOU SHOULD HAVE *CONSULTED* US, SPECTOR.
YOU MEAN I SHOULD HAVE CONSULTED *YOU*.
YOU CAN'T SOLVE EVERY PROBLEM BY THROWING *MONEY* AT IT.
THIS IS A *CLASS* THING?
GENTLEMEN...
WE'RE A *TEAM*. YOU'RE NOT THE LEADER BECAUSE YOU CAN *AFFORD* TO BE.
FUNNY, I DON'T RECALL A *VOTE*, RED.
THAT'S *ENOUGH!*
AND WHO HAS MORE *EXPERIENCE?*
I COULD *CHALLENGE* THAT.
UH... NATASHA?
YES, DAGGER?
I DON'T MEAN TO *INTERRUPT*...
...BUT MR. CAGE JUST JUMPED OFF THE ROOF.

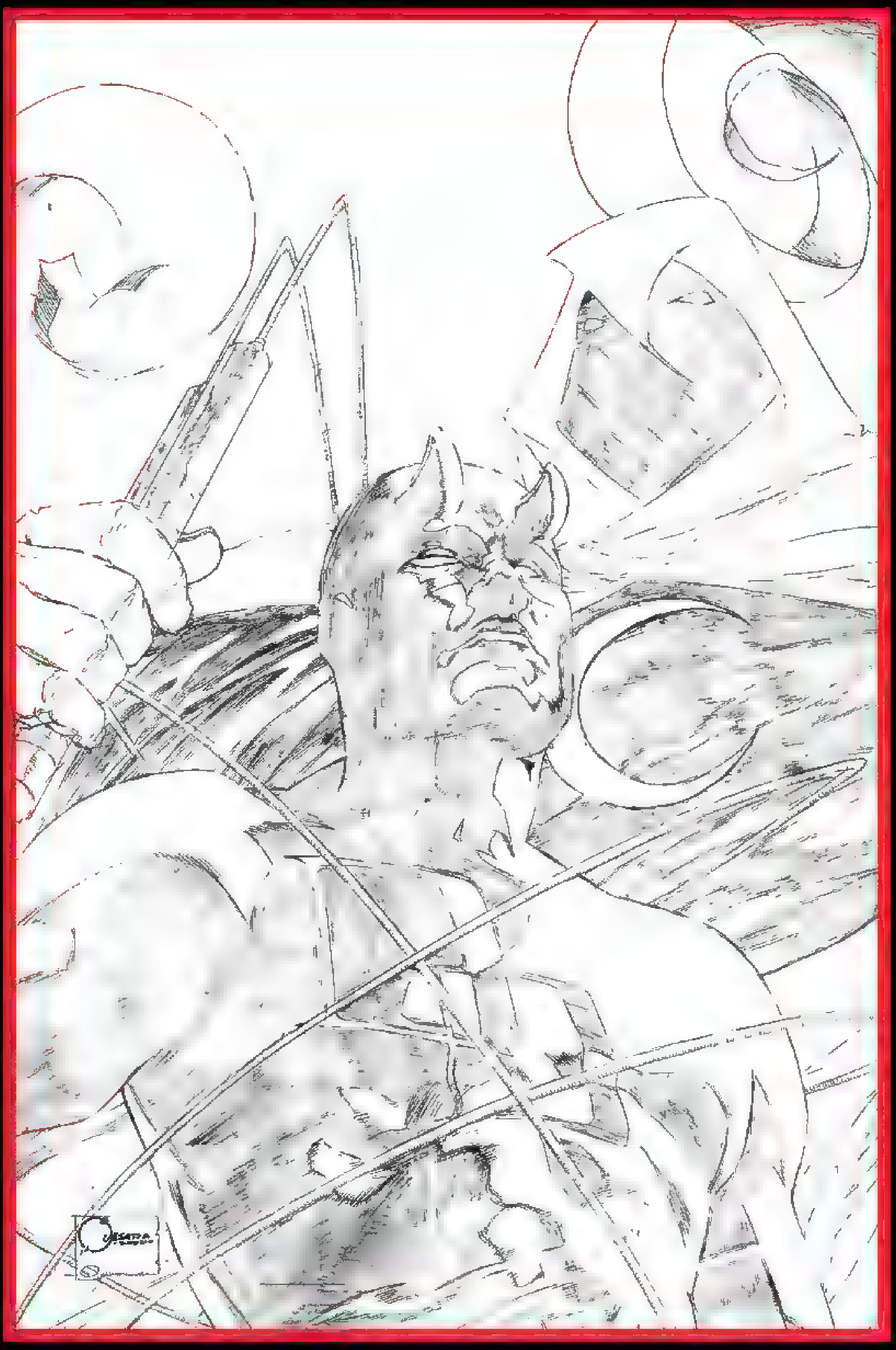
TALK. TALK. TALK.
I AIN'T GETTIN' PAID BY THE *HOUR.*
I GET PAID FOR *RESULTS.*
*BOO-YAH SUCKERS!*
YOU GUYS ARE STARTIN' TO GET ON MY *NERVES.*
I MAY BE *BULLETPROOF* BUT IT STILL *STINGS* LIKE A MOTHER.

UH!
UFF!
AGHK!
GUH!
THE FRONT DOOR. WHY DIDN'T *I* THINK OF THAT?
HAS CAGE EVER HEARD OF *STRATEGY*, SPECTOR?
HAVE *YOU* EVER HEARD OF A FULL-COURT PRESS?
LOOKS TO *ME* LIKE HE'S DOING OKAY.

NICE *PLACE* YOU GOT HERE, GENTLEMEN.
BUT PARKING'S A BLIP.
WE CAN SAVE OURSELVES A *LOT* OF TROUBLE.
EVERYBODY JUST STEP DOWN. I ONLY WANT HIM. HAND HIM UP AND I'M *GONE*.
*BEEN* A WHILE, CAGE.
YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE HIM ALL BY YOUR *BAD* SELF?
WHO SAYS I CAME *ALONE*, SHADES?

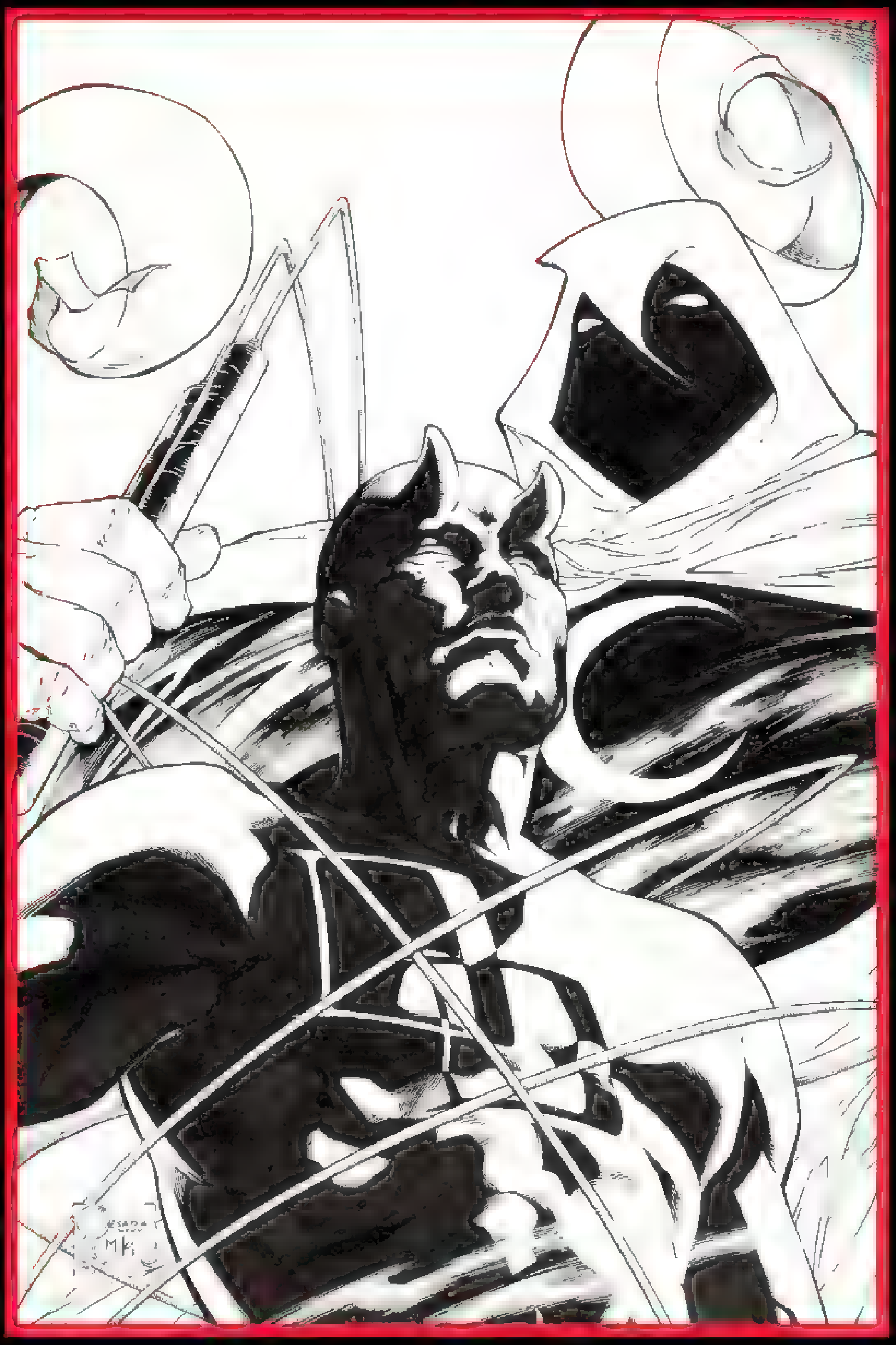
YOU EXPECTED US TO WALK INTO THIS MESS WITH YOU?
YOU'RE HERE AIN'T YOU, DAREDEVIL? MIGHT AS WELL STAY AND GET MESSY.
WHAT'S THIS? A NEW CREW OF MASKED MARVELS? I KNOW A COUPLE OF YOU.
YOU PICKED THE WRONG TIME AND THE WRONG NEIGHBORHOOD.
SEE, WE ALL JUST AGREED TO AN ALLIANCE.
NOW WE CAN SIGN IT IN BLOOD.
YOURS.

DON'T TELL ME YOU DON'T REMEMBER *TOMBSTONE*.
HOW ABOUT *BULLET* AND *BENGAL?* OLD FRIENDS OF DARDEVIL'S.
OR *BIG BEN?* HIM AND CAGE GO BACK TO THE DAYS.
SHAME YOU CAME ALL THE WAY OVER TO JERSEY JUST TO *DIE*.
SO, WAS I *RIGHT* TO BRING CAGE ALONG?
WE'LL *SEE*.
MAYBE WE SHOULD HAVE RENTED THE *HULK* WHILE WE'RE AT IT.



**JOE QUESADA**

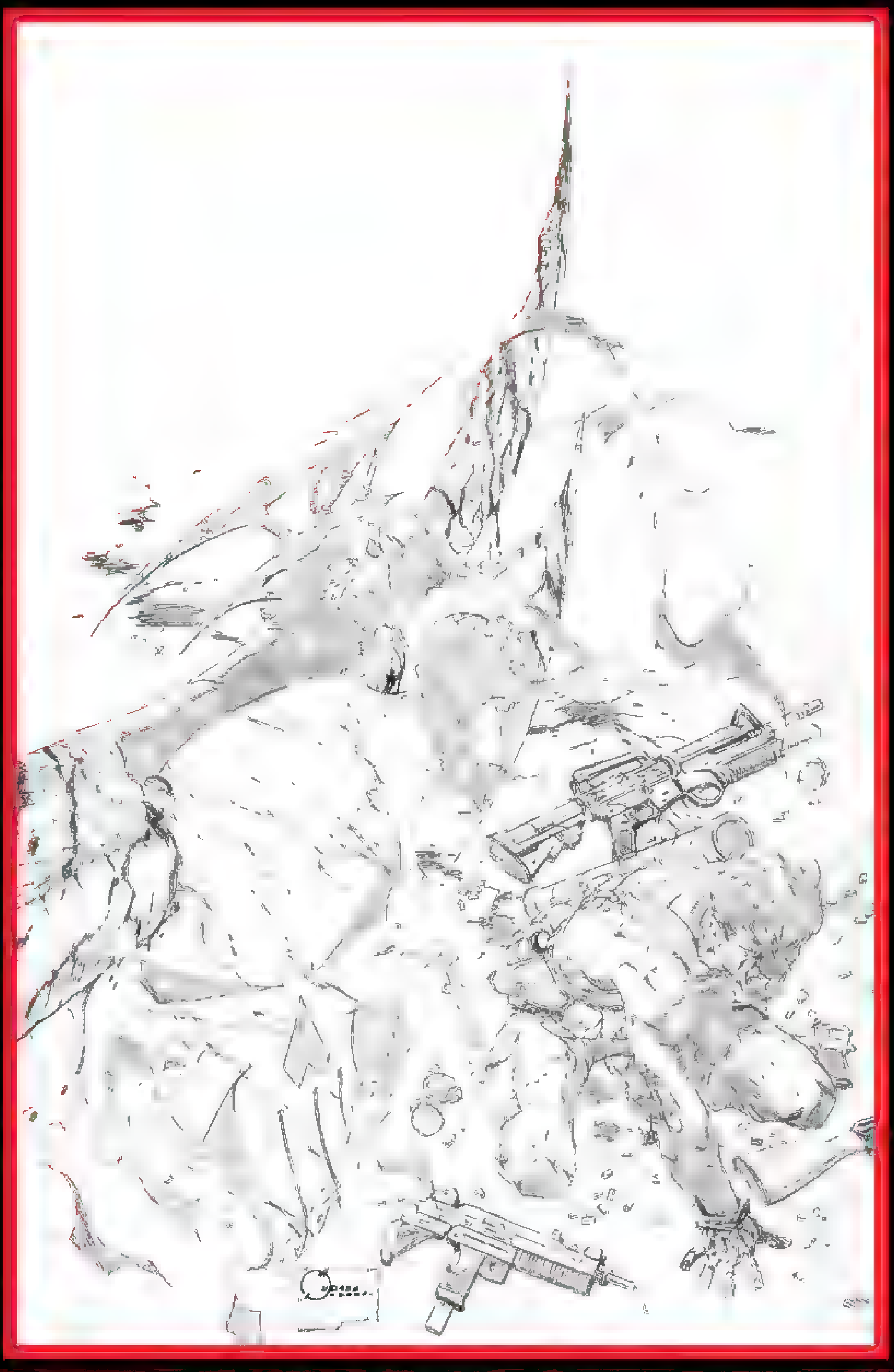
*Marvel Knights #5 cover pencils*



**DANNY MIKI**

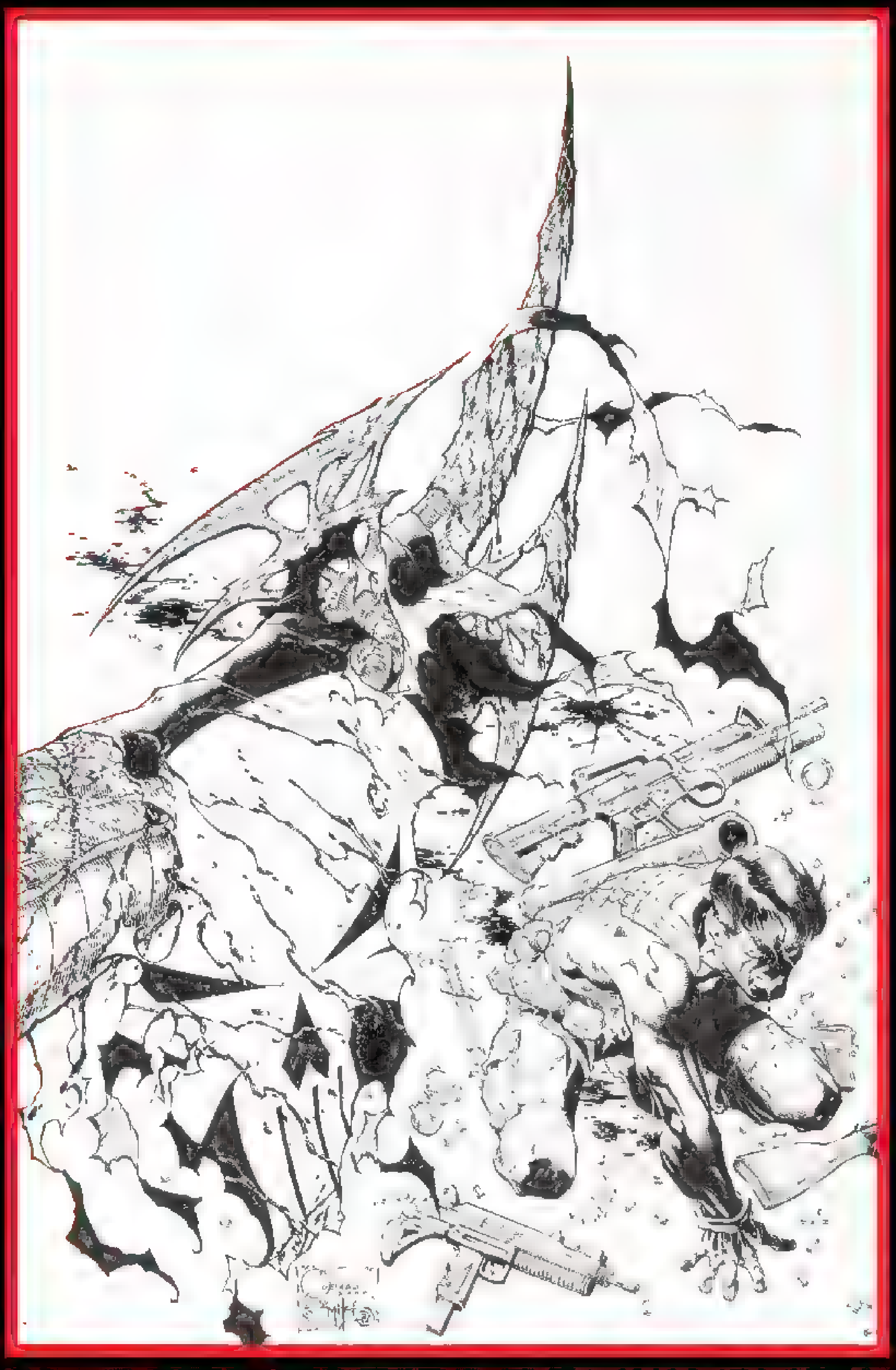
*Marvel Knights #5 cover inks*

Courtesy of HeritageAuctions.com



**JOE QUESADA**

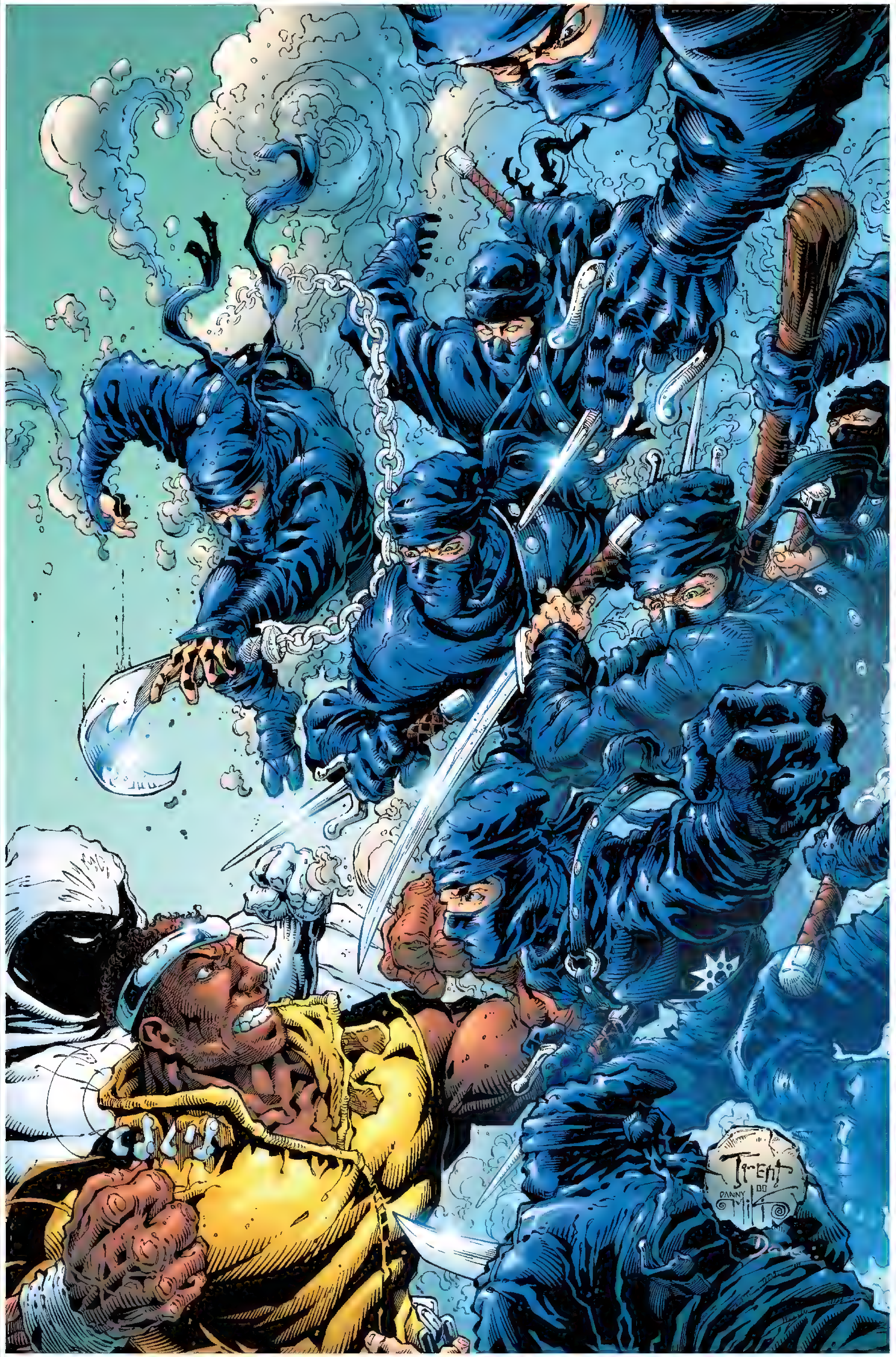
*Marvel Knights #6 cover pencils*



**JOE QUESADA** & **DANNY MIKI**

*Marvel Knights #6 cover inks*

Courtesy of HeritageAuctions.com


Trent 00
Danny
Miki
Dave

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YEAH! GET SOME OF THIS!
DIE, YOU UGLY MOTHERS!
DIE!
YEAH! LEVEL TEN!
WHO'S THE MAN?
WHO'S THE MAN?
I GIVE UP... WHO *IS* THE MAN?
WHUH?

THE LONG, LONG NIGHT
A STAN LEE PRESENTATION
HUH-HUH-WHO'RE YOU?
NICK FURY, S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT. USED TO RUN THE PLACE.
NO FOOLIN'?
NO FOOLIN'.
SO WHO'RE YOU AND WHY ARE YOU IN NATASHA'S PLACE?
METALLICA
TOMB RAIDER
PER
ZZA
CHIP

UH... I'M *TYRONE*. NATASHA SAID, SINCE I WAS A FRIEND OF DAG -- *TANDY*, I COULD STAY HERE AWHILE.
TANDY. THE BLONDE THAT WAS HERE *LAST* TIME?
YEAH.
DON'T YOU *HAVE* A HOME?
I'VE BEEN... *AWAY* FOR A WHILE. NATASHA SAID SHE'D SET ME UP.
SHE'S GOOD *PEOPLE*. SO WHERE IS SHE *TONIGHT?*
HER AND TANDY ARE WITH *DAREDEVIL* AND THEM. NOT SURE IF YOU HEARD THE LATEST.
THEY HAVE A TEAM, SORT OF.
THEY'RE AFTER THAT *PUNISHER* GUY.
IF YOU'RE *STAYIN'*, YOU WANT SOME CHIPS?
"THEY MIGHT BE *LATE* COMIN' BACK."
THIS WAS *SUPPOSED* TO BE JUST ANOTHER GANG BUST, DAREDEVIL.
NOW YOU KNOW WHY I *HATE* COMING OVER TO JERSEY, 'TASHA.

UNNNH! WHO IS THIS GUY?
HIS NAME'S BULLET, CAGE.
AND I'M RETHINKING MY POSITION ON YOUR JOINING US.
BEEN WAITING A LONG TIME TO SNAP OFF DAREDEVIL'S HEAD.
BUT FIRST I'M GONNA DO A LITTLE URBAN RENEWAL, BIG GUY.
AND I'M GONNA USE YOUR SKULL.
UH!
ALL WE WANT IS VIKTOR SMERDILOVISC.
HE'S A CONVICTED WAR CRIMINAL.
HAND HIM OVER AND WE LEAVE.
HE'S NOT WORTH A FIGHT, TOMBSTONE.
YOU BROUGHT THIS HEAT DOWN ON US, VIKTOR?
THAT IS TRUE. BUT I KNOW YOU WILL NOT LET THEM TAKE ME.
YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT. YOU'RE NOT GOIN' ANYWHERE.
YOU AIN'T LEAVIN' EITHER!
BIG BEN SAYS NOBODY'S LEAVING!
SO MUCH FOR DIPLOMACY, 'TASHA.

BIG IS GOOD.
FAST IS BETTER.
AGHK!
TAKE THEM HARD!
WORK IN CLOSE!
TAKE AWAY THEIR FIREARMS ADVANTAGE!
THANKS FOR THE POINTERS, WIDOW.
WE HAVE TO COORDINATE, MOON KNIGHT.
THE GREAT SHANG-CHI. I HAVE HEARD MANY THINGS ABOUT YOU.
YOU ARE KNOWN TO ME AS WELL, BENGAL.
GIVE IT UP.
WE CAN END THIS NOW.
UH UH UH UH!

AW... ...DON'T TELL ME I *KILLED* YOU, CAGE.
I'D HATE TO THINK THE FUN WAS *OVER.*
IT'S JUST *STARTIN',* CHUMP.
I'M GONNA *OVERTIME* WHUP YOUR GORILLA-UGLY BUTT.
THIS IS SENSELESS! ALL OF THIS FOR A *CHILD* KILLER.
IS IT *WORTH* IT? *IS* IT?
SHUT *UP.*
UH?
COME IN HERE TALKIN' *TRASH.*
TELLIN' *ME* WHAT TO DO.
YOU *CAN'T* TELL BIG BEN WHAT TO DO.

UH!
THEN I'M NOT GOING TO TALK ANY MORE.
UN!
WHOA.
THIS IS THE SUBLIME CRANE DISCIPLINE.
THERE IS ONLY ONE COUNTER FOR THAT.
SHOW ME.
ARRRGH!
Z-ZAAAP
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, BLACK WIDOW?
I SHOWED HIM, SHANG.

THAT HURTS!
IT'S MEANT TO, DURAK!
AAAH!
ENOUGH OF THIS!
COME OVER HERE MAKIN' TROUBLE.
WRECK MY CLUB.
TOMBSTONE, HEY! YOU CAN'T FIRE THAT THING IN HERE!
WATCH ME.
VROOOOOOSH

I BEEN OUT OF CIRCULATION, KNOW WHAT I'M SAYIN'?
YEAH.
LOT'S HAPPENED WHILE I BEEN GONE.
SATELLITE TEE-VEE. INTERNET SHOPPING. A NEW STAR WARS MOVIE, Y'KNOW?
IT'S ALL KIND OF STRANGE TO ME.
POP
SO I BEEN CATCHIN' UP FOR THE PAST WEEKS.
NATASHA'S A NICE LADY. SHE'S NOT RUSHING ME OUT OF HERE OR LIKE THAT.
DIT DIT DIT
SHE'S ALMOST LIKE A MOM TO TANDY.
SURE YOU DON'T WANT ANY POPCORN, COLONEL FURY?
POP POP POP POP POP POP
REAL BUTTER, MAN.
POP POP POP POP POP POP

DAREDEVIL?
NATASHA?
MR. SPECTOR?
SHANG?
CAN YOU *HEAR* ME?
*DON'T* LEAVE ME ALONE.
LOOKS LIKE *YOU'RE* THE LAST ONE STANDING, SWEETNESS.
FOR *NOW*.

IF YOU'VE *HURT* THEM...
IF THEY'RE *DEAD*...
YOU'LL BE *SORRY*.
I'LL *MAKE* YOU SORRY.
FOR A VERY...
...VERY...
...*LONG* TIME.
HUH?

TURN IT OFF!
WHAT'S GOIN' ON? YOU OKAY, COLONEL FURY?
TURN IT --
OFF!
CRASSSH
ARE YOU SICK?
YOU NEED ME TO CALL AN AMBULANCE?
NOT SICK.. NEVER GET SICK..
LOOK AT YOUR...
OH MAMA.

YOU'RE GOIN' *DOWN*, BULLET!
I CAN KEEP THIS GOIN' ALL *NIGHT*.
YOU'RE *TOUGH*, CAGE.
I ALMOST *FELT* THAT ONE.
BUT IT'S GETTING *LATE*...
...SO LET'S JUMP TO THE *END* CREDITS. OKAY?
ARRR!

CANDY
SOUNDS LIKE *BONES* SNAPPING, CAGE.
INTERNAL *BLEEDING* MAYBE?
YOUR *HIDE'S* THICK. BUT *INSIDE?* YOU'RE *WEAK.*
MIGHT AS WELL SAVE *TIME...*
...AND BURY YOU *NOW.*
I'M NOT FINISHED... I'M NOT...
YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN YOU'RE *BEAT.*
YOU'RE TOO *STUPID* TO DIE, CAGE.
WHY DON'T YOU JUST LAY DOWN AND --
-- *UH?*

WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT ARE THESE THINGS?
AGGHH!
CANDY
SODA
ICE CREAM
THEY BURN!
HELP ME, CAGE!
GET 'EM OFF --
AAAAAAHHH!
SWEET CHRISTMAS...
MAN...

WHERE DID ALL *THE HOODS* GO?
THEY *VANISHED.* ANYONE SEE WHAT *HAPPENED?*
*I* WAS OUT COLD.
*YOU* SEE ANYTHING, SHANG?
I AWOKE *AFTER* YOU, SPECTOR.
OUR ENEMIES ARE *GONE.*
GONE *WHERE?* THEY HAD US AT THEIR *MERCY.* THERE'S NO WAY THEY --
I SAW *SOME* OF WHAT WENT DOWN, FOLKS...
...BUT I THINK *SHE'S* THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN REALLY ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.

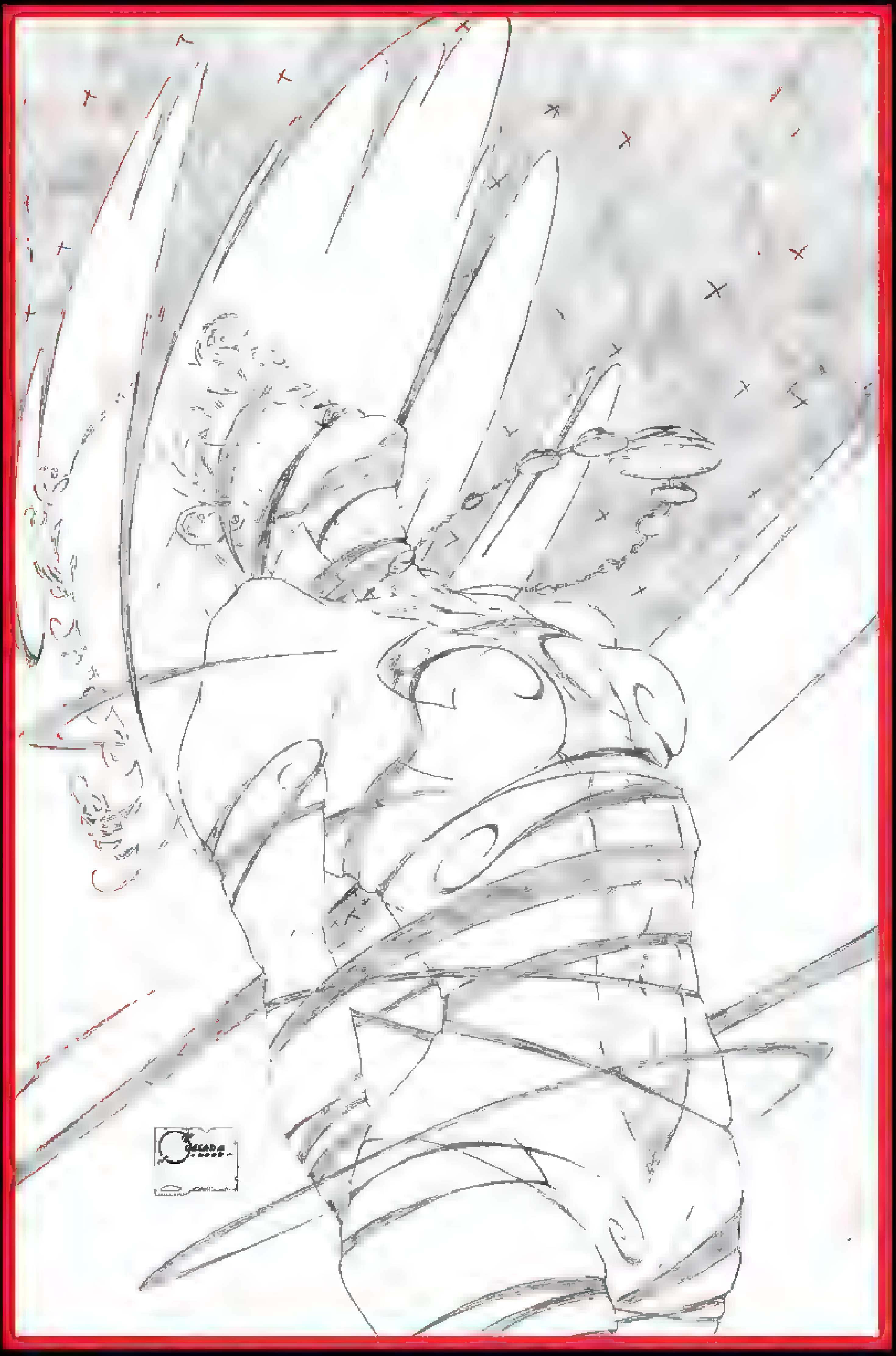
THIS IS WHERE WE WILL FIND HIM?
I ALWAYS FIND MY QUARRY, MR. LU.
HE'S JOINED A GROUP OF HEROES.
SHANG-CHI HAS MADE FRIENDS, ZARAN?
POWERFUL FRIENDS, MR. LU.
THE MASTER MUST KNOW.
YOU HAVE FOUND MY SON.
NO. BUT ZARAN HAS FOUND THE PLACE WHERE HE DWELLS.
WE NEED ONLY LIE IN WAIT, MAGNIFICENT ONE.
TAKE NO CHANCES. I WANT HIM SLAIN.
HE HAS ALLIES, MASTER.
ALLIES?

MASKED HEROES. SOME HAVE OPPOSED YOU BEFORE, BENEVOLENT MASTER.
THE BUILDING IS A SORT OF HEADQUARTERS FOR THEM.
I SHALL SEND MY BEST WARRIORS; DACOITS TRAINED IN MURDER AND DESTRUCTION.
THEY WILL MAKE THIS PLACE A TOMB.
PLEASE, MASTER. ALLOW ME TO EXPUNGE MY ERRORS.
GIVE ME ANOTHER CHANCE TO TAKE THE LIFE OF YOUR SON.
AS YOU WISH, ZARAN.
"EVEN NOW MY DACOITS APPROACH YOUR POSITION.
"YOU WILL LEAD THEM IN BATTLE AGAINST SHANG-CHI AND HIS COMRADES.
"AND DO NOT FAIL ME AGAIN, ZARAN."

HOW'D YOU LIKE THE *FIRST* NIGHT ON THE JOB, LUKE?
YOU *SAID* I'D EARN MY CASH, MOON KNIGHT.
YOU TOOK A *BEATING.*
WE *ALL* DID. BUT I BOUNCE BACK *QUICK.*
ANY CHANCE OF A *CLOTHING* ALLOWANCE, THOUGH?
NO *PROBLEM.*
RIGHTEOUS.
FUNNY, I'M MORE WORRIED ABOUT *DAGGER* THAN ANYONE ELSE.
AND SHE DOESN'T HAVE A MARK *ON* HER.
I THINK YOU SHOULD LET ME TAKE YOU TO A *HOSPITAL,* 'TASHA.
I'M FINE. MY *EARS* ARE RINGING BUT THAT'S ALL.
I THOUGHT YOU ALL WERE DEAD.

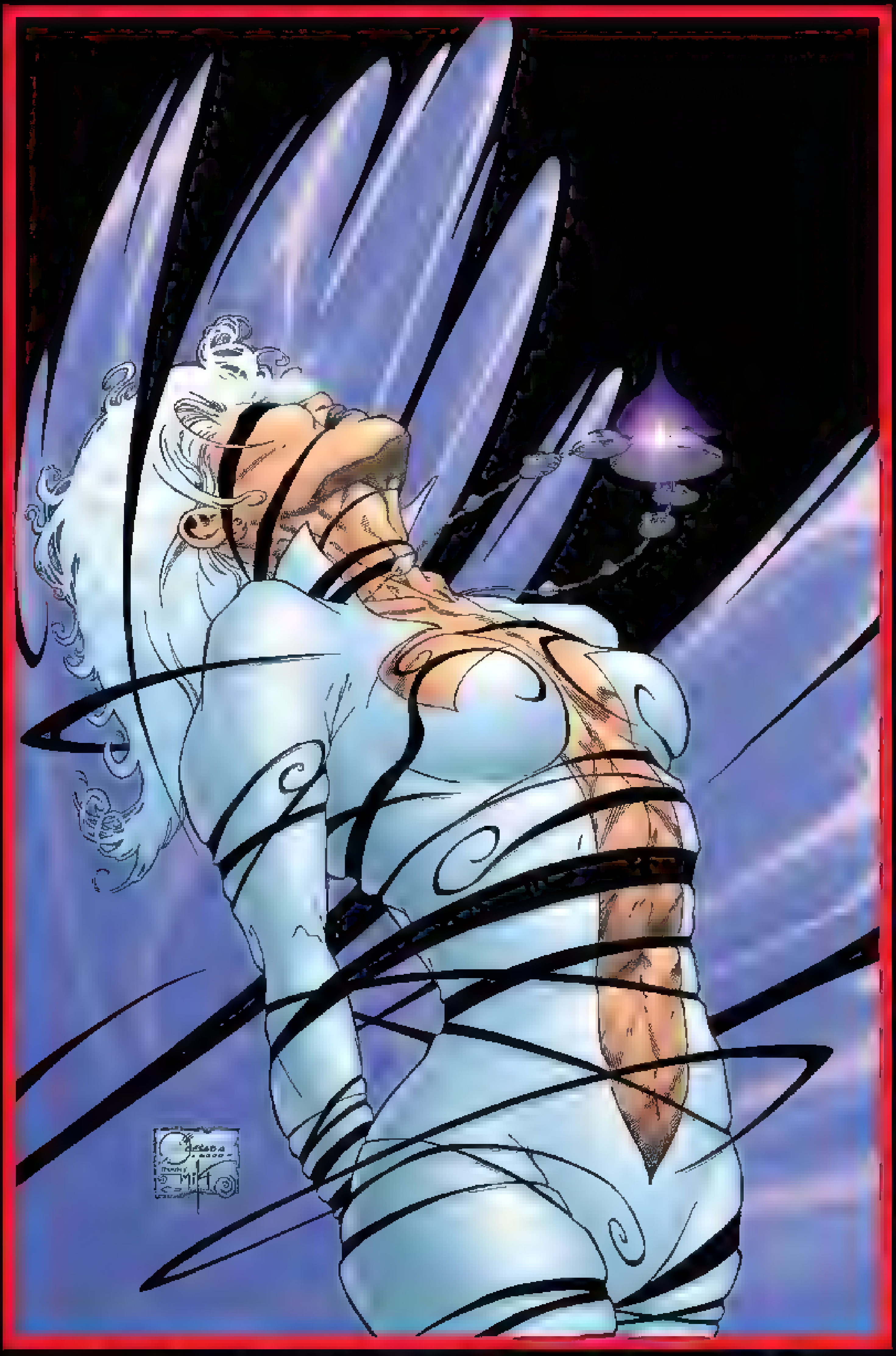
I WAS *FRIGHTENED.*
THEN I WAS *ANGRY.*
THEN...
I DON'T *REMEMBER* WHAT HAPPENED.
I CAN'T *LEAVE* HER.
OKAY, 'TASHA. I UNDERSTAND. IF THERE'S *ANYTHING* I CAN DO...
I THINK ALL SHE NEEDS IS QUIET AND SOME *SLEEP.*
SHE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO *KNOWS* WHAT WENT ON.
GIVE HER SOME TIME. SHE'LL REMEMBER.
WE'RE NOT GOING TO GET ANSWERS *TONIGHT.* AND WE *ALL* NEED SOME REST.
WE WERE NEARLY *DEFEATED* TONIGHT. AND I DON'T WANT TO *THINK* ABOUT IT ANYMORE.
LOOKS LIKE THIS IS WHERE YOU GET *OFF,* LADIES.
YOU CAN SOAK IN THE TUB AND I'LL MAKE YOU SOME HERBAL TEA.
SOUNDS LIKE *HEAVEN,* NATASHA.

WHERE DO YOU THINK THOSE MEN WENT? WHY DID I BLACK OUT?
TIME ENOUGH FOR ANSWERS IN THE MORNING, TANDY. TRY TO FORGET IT FOR NOW.
WE DIDN'T EVEN CALL TYRONE. HE'LL BE WORRIED.
WITH SIXTY MOVIE CHANNELS? HE PROBABLY DIDN'T NOTICE WE WERE GONE.
TYRONE!
I CAME BY, NATASHA. YOU WEREN'T HERE.
SO I MADE MYSELF AT HOME.



**JOE QUESADA**

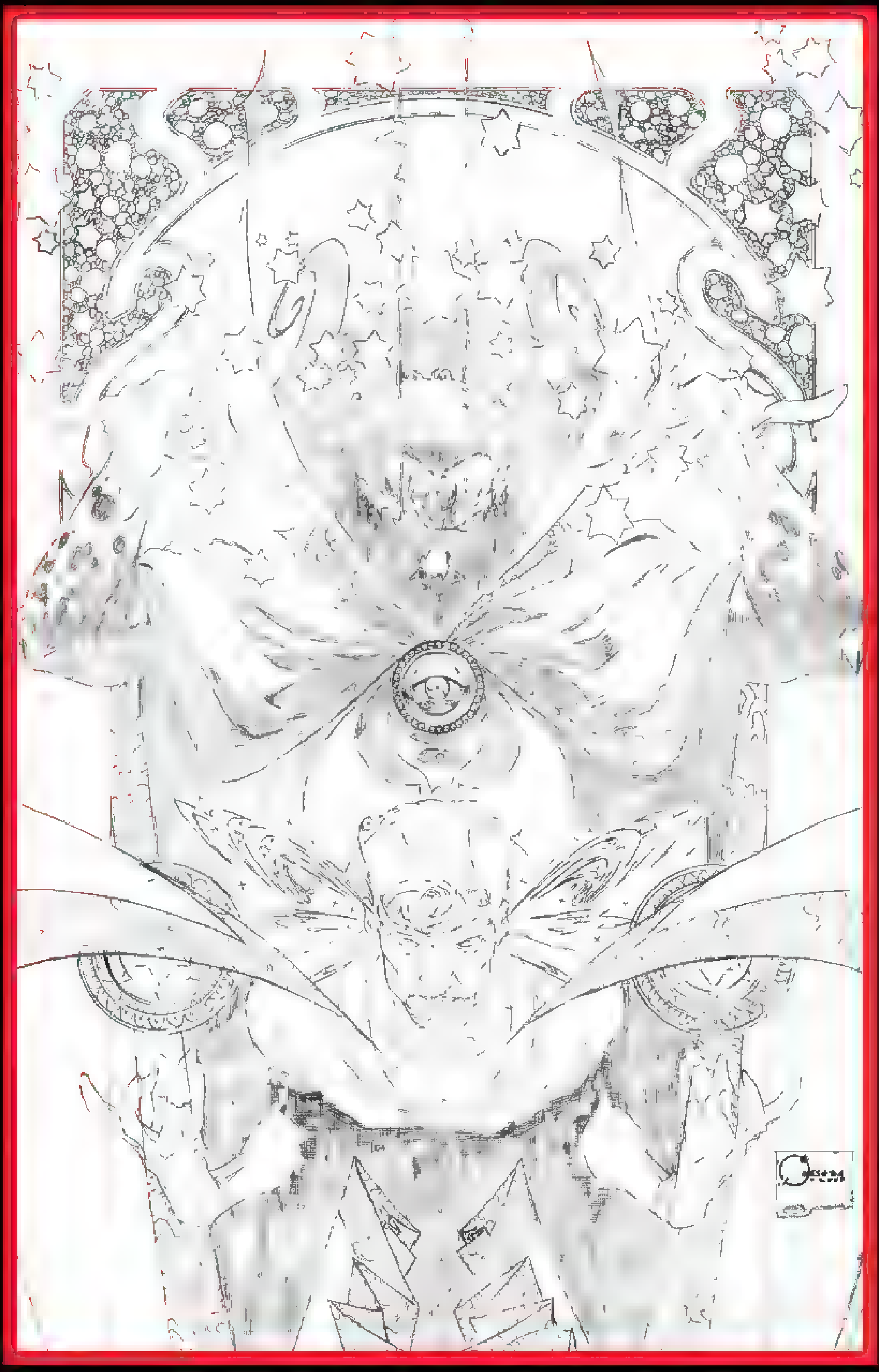
*Marvel Knights #7* cover pencils



**JOE QUESADA, DANNY MIKI**

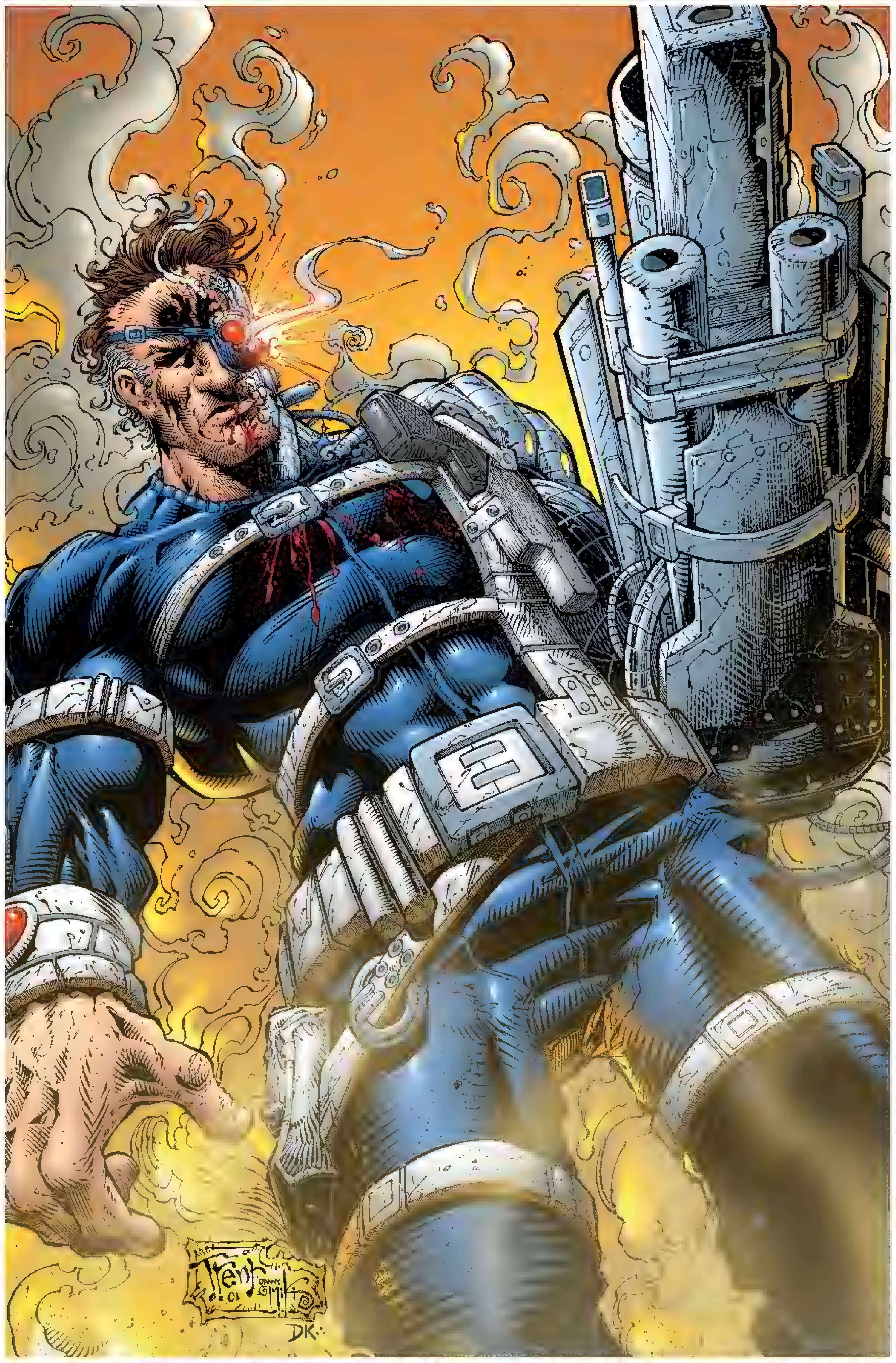
& AVALON'S **DAVE KEMP**

*Marvel Knights #7* alternate cover colors



**JOE QUESADA**

*Marvel Knights #8* cover pencils



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ISN'T THAT *COLONEL FURY?* THE GUY WHO RUNS THAT SECRET *SPY* THING YOU BELONG TO?
I THOUGHT HE WAS YOUR *FRIEND,* NATASHA.
HE *IS,* DAGGER.

BUT THAT'S NOT FURY!
STAN LEE PRESENTS
NO REST FOR THE WICKED
YOU CAME HOME, BLACK WIDOW! CAME HOME TO DIE!
THEN WHO IS HE?
YOU MUST DIE. IT IS MY PRIME OBJECTIVE.
I CANNOT FAIL.
IT'S NOT A "WHO," DAGGER. IT'S A MACHINE. A LIFE MODEL DECOY.
A ROBOT?
MORE THAN THAT. DEADLIER THAN THAT.
AND TYRONE IS IN THERE WITH IT!

I HAVE TO *PROTECT* HIM! HE'S *HELPLESS!*
*NO*, DAGGER! THERE'S *NOTHING* YOU CAN DO!
YOUR POWERS WON'T *WORK* ON HIM!
I HAVE TO DO *SOMETHING!*
OPPOSE ME AND DIE WITH MY TARGET.
IT DOESN'T *HAVE* A SOUL!
YOUR *DAGGERS* HAVE NO EFFECT. BUT MY *STING* SHOULD SLOW IT DOWN.

FOLLOW *ME.*
WE'LL NEED *HEAVY* WEAPONS TO TAKE THIS DOWN.
WEAPONS?
AND ONCE I'VE DESTROYED IT, I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHO *SENT* IT.
ANY *SUSPECTS?*
*LMDS* ARE MADE BY S.H.I.E.L.D.
BUT YOU *WORK* FOR S.H.I.E.L.D. WOW.
"'*WOW*' IS RIGHT, TANDY.
"SOMEONE *INSIDE* S.H.I.E.L.D. WANTS ME DEAD.
"AND I PLAN ON LIVING *LONG* ENOUGH TO FIND OUT WHO.
"AND *WHY.*"

MAN, LOOK AT *THIS*.
IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN BUY OFF THE *RACK*, Y'KNOW.
ALL MY THREADS ARE *CUSTOM*. HAVE TO BE TO *FIT* THIS MANLY FRAME.
AND THAT FOOL *BULLET* TORE 'EM UP.
WELL, WE *TALKED* ABOUT A CLOTHING ALLOWANCE, LUKE.
YEAH? IS THAT OKAY WITH *DAREDEVIL?*
IT'S *SPECTOR'S* MONEY. I CAN'T REALLY *COMPLAIN* ABOUT HIM PAYING YOU A RETAINER.
HE SPENT *MILLIONS* ON THIS CRIME FIGHTING CENTER FOR US.
AND I WANT SOME *BANG* FOR MY BUCKS. WE GOT LUCKY TONIGHT.
WE HAVE TO HAVE MORE OF A *STRATEGY* NEXT TIME.
I HAVE SOME IDEAS ABOUT THAT.
MONEY. CLOTHING. STRATEGY. YOU SPEAK OF VAIN *MATERIALISM*.
ALL TO *AVOID* TALKING OF TONIGHT'S OMINOUS EVENTS.

WE *KNOW,* SHANG.
BUT WHAT'S THERE TO TALK *ABOUT?*
I SAW *PART* OF IT AND EVEN *I* DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.
TOMBSTONE AND HIS NEW GANG HAD US DEAD BANG. WE WERE AT THEIR MERCY WITH ONLY *DAGGER* LEFT STANDING.
I WAS IN AND OUT OF CONSCIOUSNESS AFTER THAT *GRENADE* WENT OFF.
I WAS IN RAGGEDY SHAPE *MYSELF.* BULLET HANDED ME THE WHUPPIN' OF MY *LIFE.*
"ALL I SAW WAS HIM BEING CLOTHESLINED BY SOME FREAKY *TENTACLES.* THEN... GONE."
ALL OF OUR ENEMIES VANISH.
DAGGER LEFT ALONE AND UNHARMED.
WE HAVE AN UGLY *TRUTH* WE MUST FACE.
WHEN DAGGER *"CURED"* TYRONE...
...SHE ABSORBED HIS *CLOAK* PERSONA.

YOU GUYS ARE TALKIN' *KLINGON* FAR AS I'M CONCERNED.
ALL THIS HAPPENED *BEFORE* I JOINED THIS TOUR.
YOU GENTLEMEN WILL EXCUSE ME WHILE I FIND THAT *WHIRLPOOL* TUB I SAW 'ROUND HERE.
IT'S JUST AHEAD THROUGH THE DOORWAY, LUKE.
BROTHER, I KNOW I'M SUPPOSED TO BE A *SUPER HERO* AND ALL THAT NOISE...
...BUT I DON'T MIND SAYIN' THAT MRS. CAGE'S BOY IS *HURTIN'* ABOUT NOW.
L 3
I'M GONNA SOAK, HAVE A BEER AND SLEEP FOR *TWELVE* HOURS.
AND I DON'T EVEN WANT TO *HEAR* THE WORD --
LEV
-- TROUBLE.
SWEET MAMA.

YOUR DAGGERS ARE *USELESS.*
MY STING WILL ONLY *SLOW* IT.
THAT'S A *BIG* GUN, NATASHA.
I HAVE TO *DESTROY* IT. *ENTIRELY.*
EVERY *PART* OF AN *LMD* IS DEADLY. EVERY MODULE WORKS *INDEPENDENTLY.*
IT'S A WALKING...
...ARSENAL.
VSSSSH
VSSSSH
VSSSSH
VSSSSH
UNNH!
UH... UH...

LEVEL 3
DAG!
DACOITS. A BURMESE *ASSASSIN* CULT.
SENT BY YOUR *FATHER*, SHANG?
YES.
OKAY, SO WE *KNOW* YOUR DADDY SENT 'EM.
NOW, GET 'EM *OFF* ME!

"YOU CAN TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FAMILY *LATER*, OKAY?"
IS ALL PREPARED?
THE DEVICE IS IN POSITION AS YOU *DIRECTED*, MERCIFUL MASTER. THE DACOITS HAVE PLACED IT AS YOU DIRECTED.
I AM PLEASED.
I *LIVE* FOR NOTHING LESS.
AND HOW WILL YOU DIE?
ECSTATIC IN *YOUR* SERVICE, MAGNIFICENT ONE.
TEN MINUTES, ZARAN. TEN MINUTES TO SLAY MY SON OR HE DIES BY *MY* HAND.
I WILL *SEE* THE LIFE FADE FROM HIS EYES.
AND SHOULD YOU *FAIL*?
I WILL HAVE *SERVED*, EXALTED ONE.
I WILL NOT *HAVE* A REBELLIOUS HEIR.
MY FUTURE DESIGNS WILL NO LONGER INCLUDE HIS *CHAOTIC* INFLUENCE.

CKOABKO!
YOU CANNOT *KILL* ME.
YOU CANNOT *HARM* OR EVEN *TIRE* ME.
YOUR DEATH IS *INEVITABLE.*
UH... UFF...
AAAH!
OH, YEAH...
HUNGRY JOE
NEW!
BEEF STEAK

THESE GUYS *AREN'T* NINJAS?
DACOITS, LIKE THE JEZAILS AND HASHISHIN! HAVE SERVED MY FATHER FOR *CENTURIES*.
HOW OLD *IS* YOUR DAD?
HE AIN'T GONNA GET ANY *OLDER* IF I GET MY *HANDS* ON HIM!
MAN, HE GET A *QUANTITY* DISCOUNT ON THESE MOTHERS?
*SHANG-CHI!*
I BRING YOU *DEATH!*
*ZARAN!*
I *HEARD* OF THIS GUY.
THEY CALL YOU THE *WEAPONS* MASTER, RIGHT?

AND YOU ARE MARC SPECTOR. WE ARE FELLOW *MERCENARIES.*
I *WAS* A MERCENARY.
BUT *NEVER* A HIRED KILLER.
STAY IN A *GROUP!* THEY *SEPARATE* US AND WE'RE FINISHED!
YOU *COACHIN'* ME, 'DEVIL? I MAY NOT KNOW ALL THIS *KARATE* STUFF...
...BUT I DO ALL *RIGHT!*
AND WHAT DO YOU CALL *THIS* MOVE, LUKE?

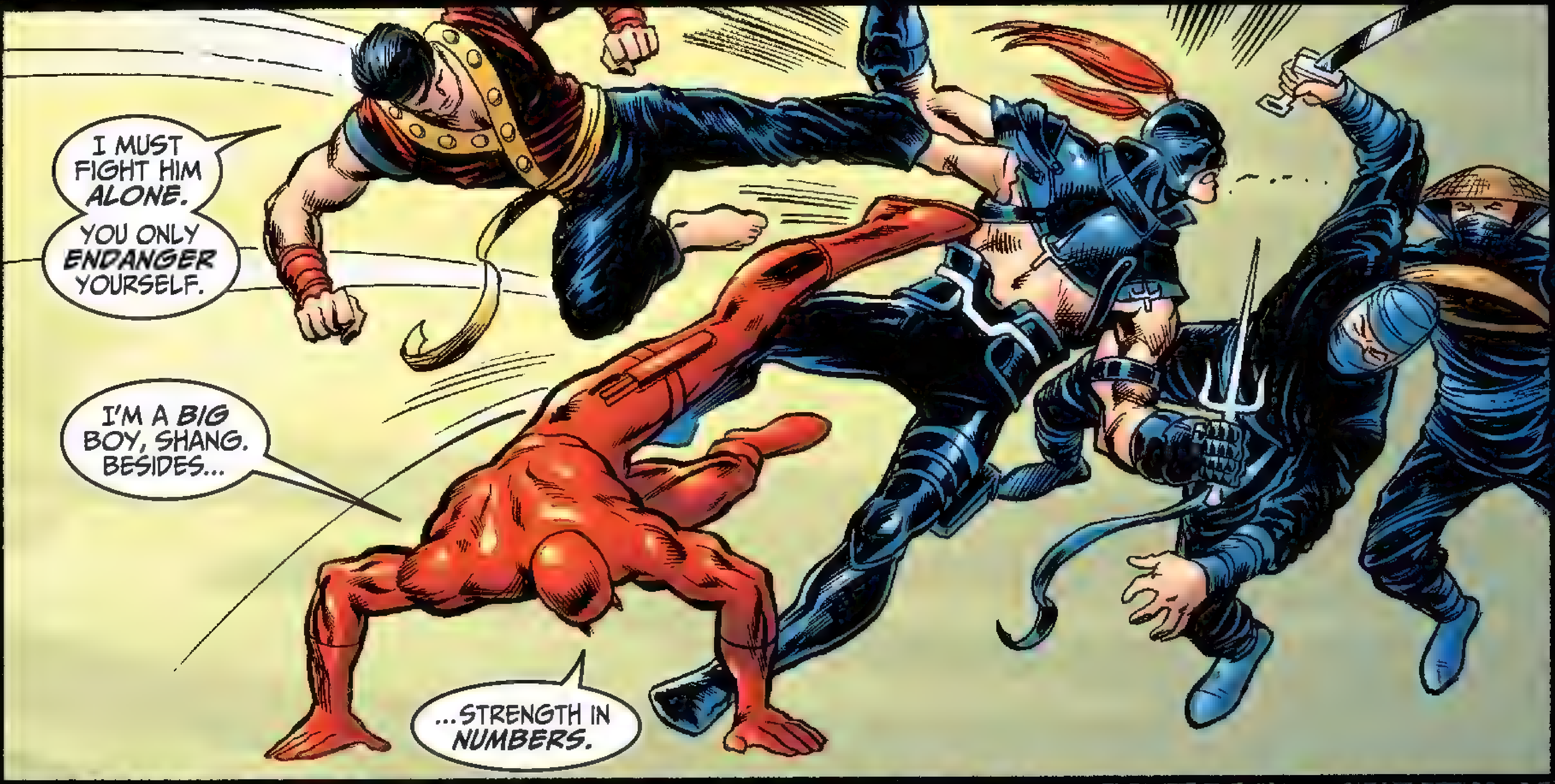
I CALL IT *CAGE-FU.* JUMP BACK AND WATCH THE MAN *WORK!*
LEAVIN' SO *SOON?*
DON'T LET SEVENTH *AVENUE* HIT YOU ON THE BUTT ON THE WAY OUT.
THIS IS BUT A *FEINT.*
DIRECT ACTION IS *NOT* MY FATHER'S STYLE. THERE IS A *HIDDEN* DANGER HERE.

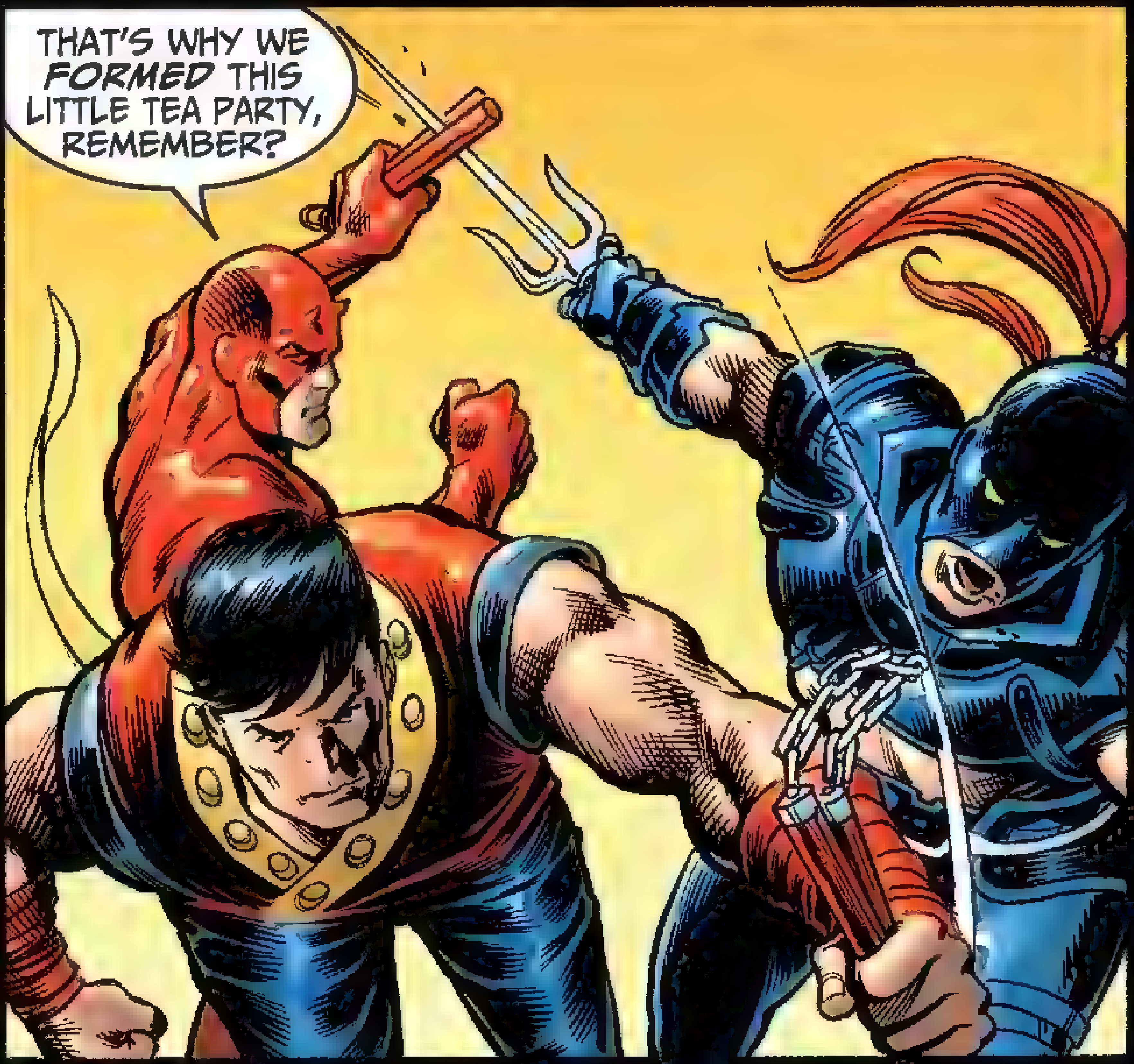
"SOMETHING WE ARE NOT *MEANT* TO KNOW."
WHAT DO WE *DO,* NATASHA?
JUST STAY *AWAY* FROM IT WHILE I THINK OF SOMETHING.
AGHK!
YOU'RE PROBABLY WONDERING WHO *SENT* ME.
GONNA RE-WIRE YOUR AMP...
DEET DEET DEET DEET
NEW!
A LITTLE MICROWAVE MELTDOWN...
BRZZMMMMMM
YOU WILL DIE NEVER *KNOWING,* NATASHA ROMANOV.
NNGG!

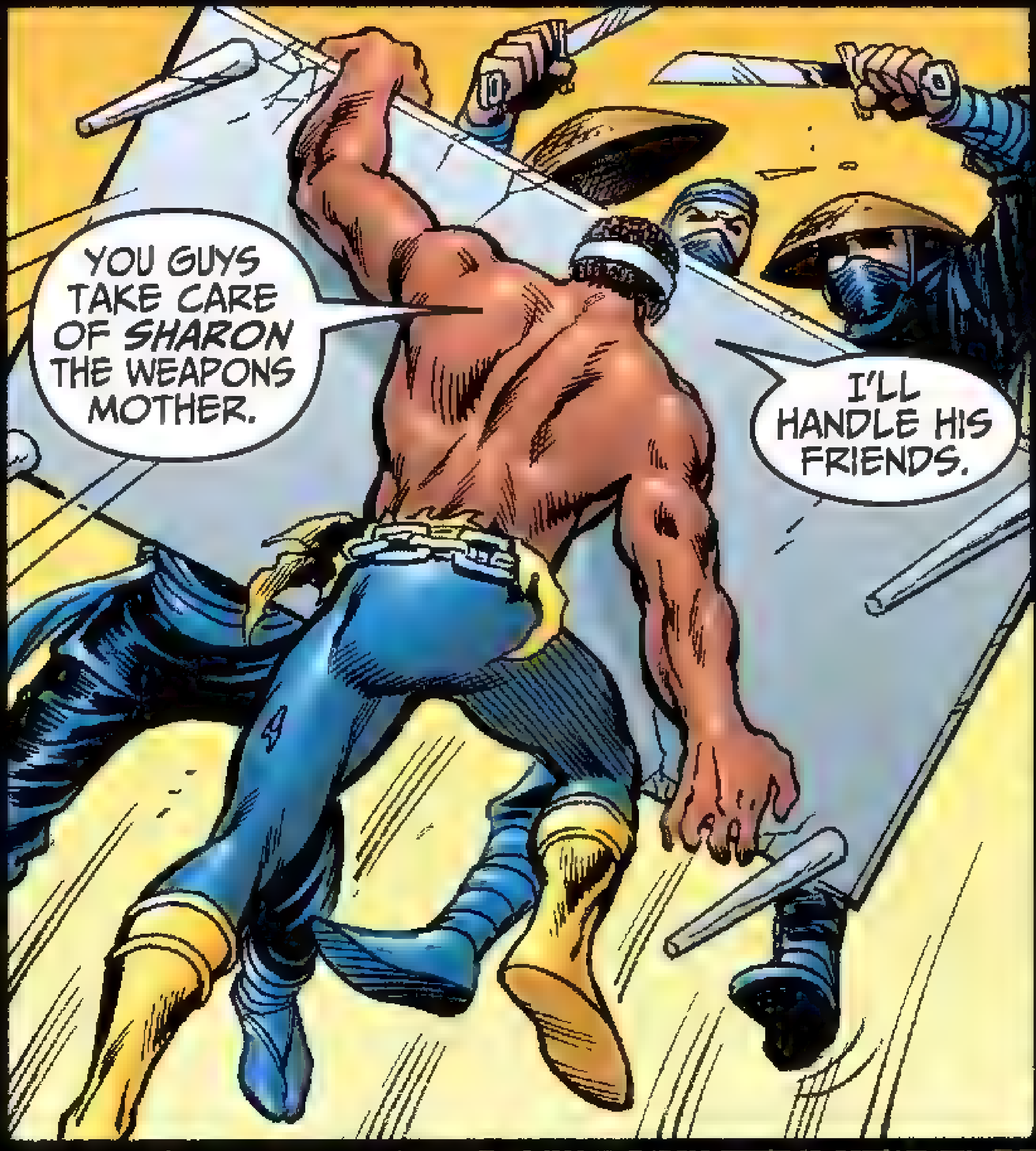
THESE DACOIT ARE BUT *PAWNS.*
THEY ARE ONLY MEANT TO KEEP US *OCCUPIED.*
ANY *MORE* OCCUPIED AND I'LL NEED LAST RITES.
THESE GUYS ARE EVEN MORE *PERSISTENT* THAN NINJAS.
IRON FIST AND I MESSED WITH THESE BURMESE CATS *BEFORE.*
THEY TAKE A GOOD *THUMPIN'.*
I BELIEVE WE ALMOST CROSSED *PATHS* ONCE, SPECTOR. THE CIVIL WAR IN URUNDU.
LET ME *GUESS...*
...YOU RAN ONE OF THE PRESIDENT'S *DEATH* SQUADS.
IT WAS *UNREWARDING* WORK.
UNLIKE KILLING A *WARRIOR* SUCH AS YOU.

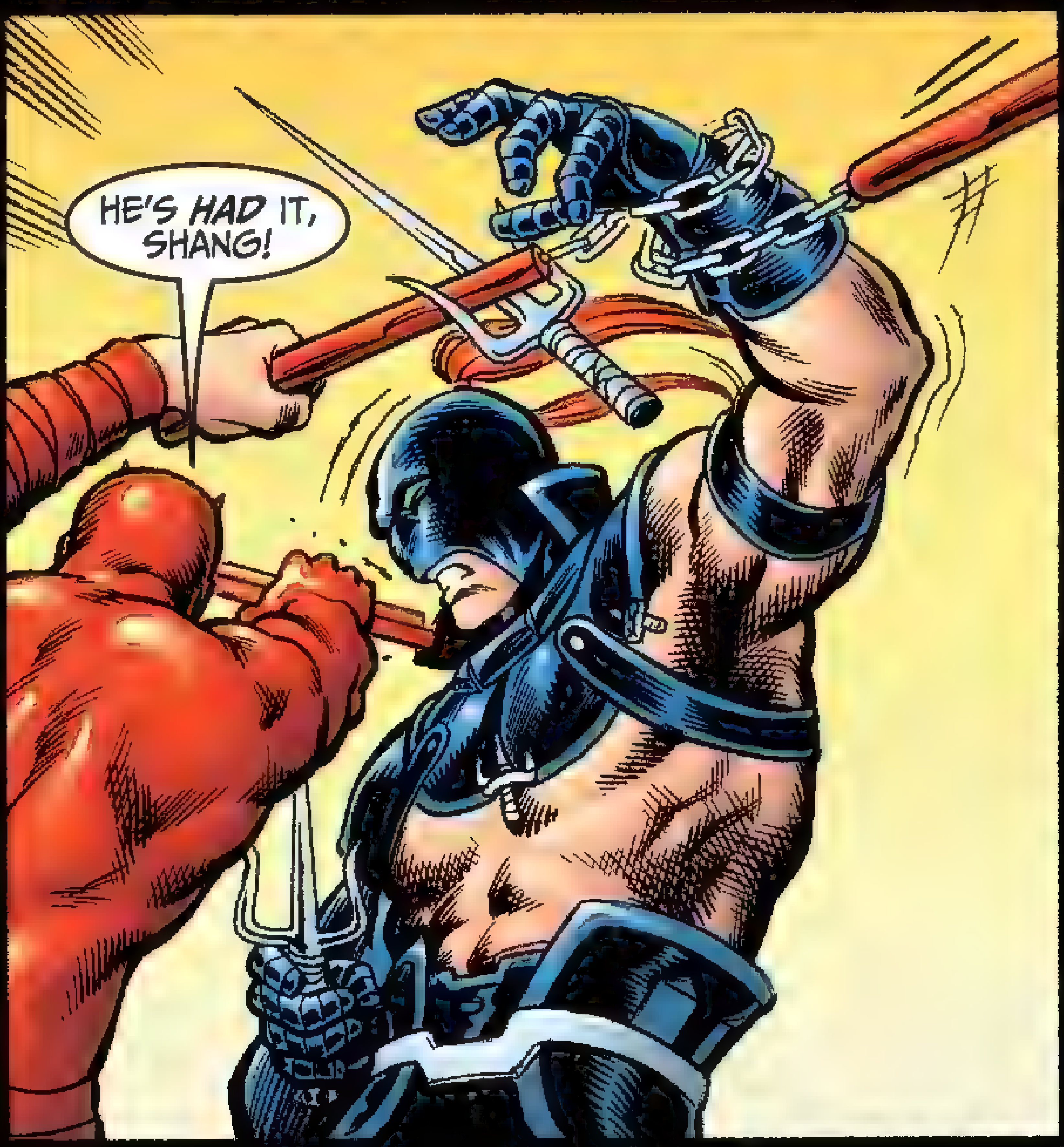
GONNA HAVE TO DISAPPOINT YOU THERE, ZARRY.
I DON'T DIE SO *EASY*.
YOU'LL HAVE TO *EARN* WHAT SHANG'S PAPA PAID YOU.
BUT FROM HERE IT LOOKS LIKE HE *WASTED* HIS CASH.
FOOL.
ZARAN IS *NEVER* DISARMED.
UH?
YOU WERE NOT ADEPT ENOUGH TO FACE ZARAN, SPECTOR.
ONLY *I* HAVE EVER DEFEATED HIM.
I'D LIKE TO HELP YOU *HEDGE* THAT BET, SHANG.

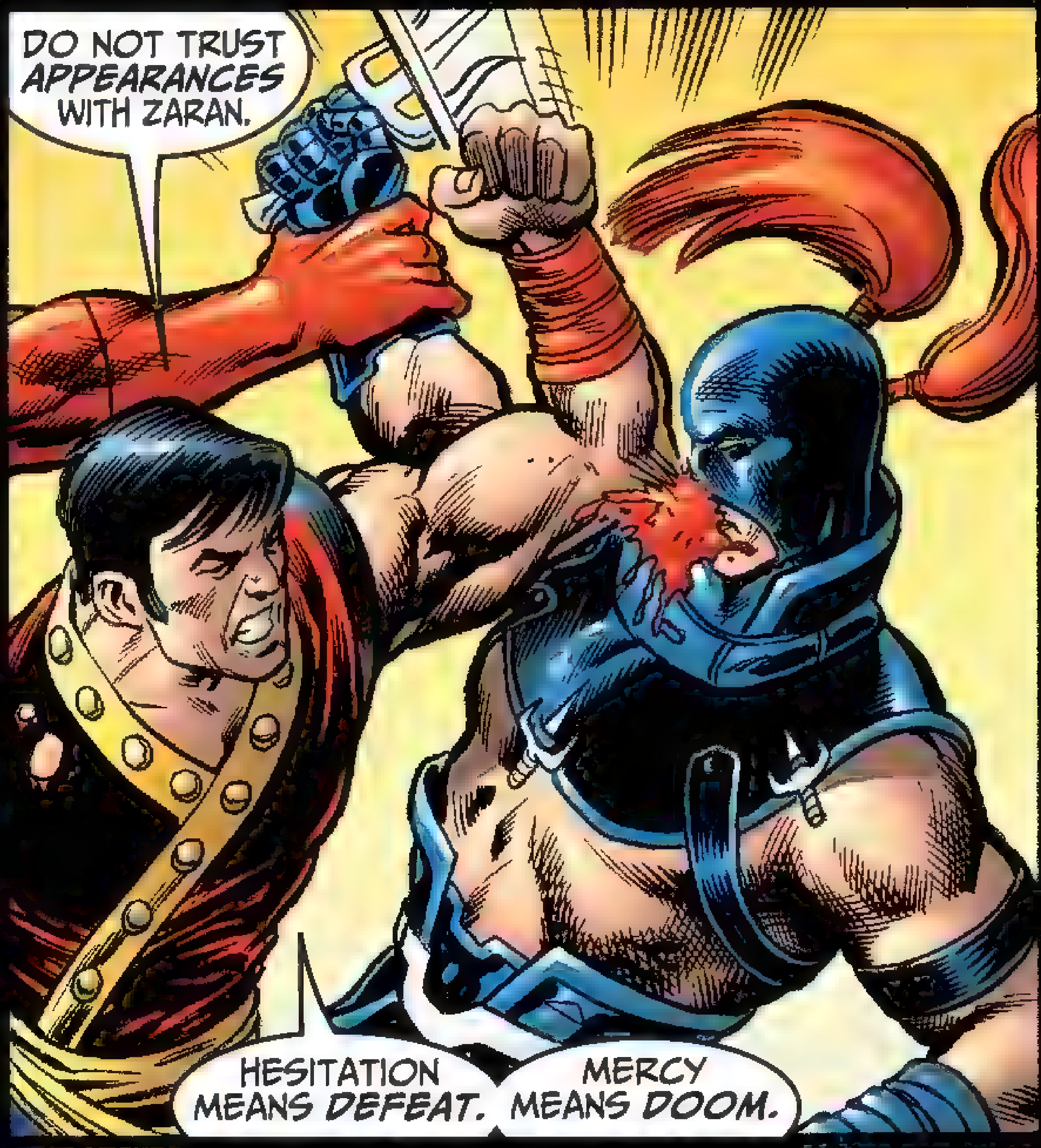
YOUR FINAL THOUGHTS *TORMENT* YOU.
SO MANY *QUESTIONS.*
BRZZMMMMMM
SOUP'S ON, TINBUTT!
UNCODED MICROWAVE TRANSMISSIONS --
GIGGA-GIGGA-GIH-GIH-GIH --
BUH-BLAAAAM
ILLEGAL FUNCTION!
FZZZZZ
WHO *SENT* YOU?


I MUST FIGHT HIM *ALONE.*
YOU ONLY *ENDANGER* YOURSELF.
I'M A *BIG* BOY, SHANG. BESIDES...
...STRENGTH IN *NUMBERS.*


THAT'S WHY WE *FORMED* THIS LITTLE TEA PARTY, REMEMBER?


YOU GUYS TAKE CARE OF *SHARON* THE WEAPONS MOTHER.
I'LL HANDLE HIS FRIENDS.


HE'S *HAD* IT, SHANG!


DO NOT TRUST *APPEARANCES* WITH ZARAN.
HESITATION MEANS *DEFEAT.*
MERCY MEANS *DOOM.*

YOU KNOW HIM BETTER THAN I DO...
...BUT I STILL DON'T LIKE BEING PART OF A *BEATING*.
KAI!
*NOW* IT IS OVER. ZARAN IS *VANQUISHED*.
ME *TOO*.
SPECTOR...
NOTHING VITAL WAS HIT. I'VE HAD *WORSE*.
NOW YOU WILL *PAY* FOR YOUR CRIMES, ZARAN.
WE SHALL ALL SUFFER PUNISHMENT TOGETHER...
YOU THINK YOU HAVE DEFEATED YOUR FATHER --
IT IS HIS THAT WILL BE THE LAST WORD... THE FINAL VERDICT...
YOU MAY MEASURE YOUR LIFE IN *SECONDS*...

IS IT JUST *ME* OR DOES THAT SOUND BAD?
WE HAVE TO *MOVE* YOU, SPECTOR. YOU NEED TO GET TO A HOSPITAL.
I CAN -- UH -- *HANDLE* IT, DEVIL. JUST SO LONG AS --
"-- NOTHING *ELSE* HAPPENS!"
BUH-KRAAAAAAAM

MARVEL
KNIGHTS

## 14

STAN LEE PRESENTS:
EVERYTHING DIES
YOU HAVE SOMETHING FOR ME?
YOU GONNA BE STUPID LIKE YOUR FRIEND THERE?
WAR JOURNAL ENTRY BROWN HEROIN'S ON THE RISE IN THE CITY. I'M WORKING MY WAY UP THE CHAIN TO THE BIG MOVERS.

THIS MOOK IS STRICTLY LOWER MANAGEMENT.
YOU'RE THE PUNISHER! I TELL YOU AN' YOU CAP ME LIKE RICKY.
I DON' TELL YOU AND YOU CAP ME.
SO I NEED SOME INSURANCE, RIGHT?
I'M NOT IN THE INSURANCE BUSINESS.
BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM
LOOKS LIKE I START OVER.
SHHFTFT
I'M NOT ALONE HERE.

TUNNELS UNDER MANHATTAN ARE HOME TO A SHADOW POPULATION.
OUT OF THE LIGHT AND HIDDEN FROM THE LAW.
HOMELESS. DERELICTS. MOPES AND CRACKHEADS.
OR SOMETHING ELSE.
SOMETHING THAT WAS NEVER HUMAN.
HURT ME NO! I DINNIT SEE! SEE NO!

WHAT ARE YOU?
WHO ARE YOU?
VERMIN ME AM!
ONLY VERMIN!
ME NO SEE! ME NO TALK.
SEE NO ONE! TALK NO ONE! KILL ME NO!
YOU KILL VERMIN ME?
I'M THINKING.

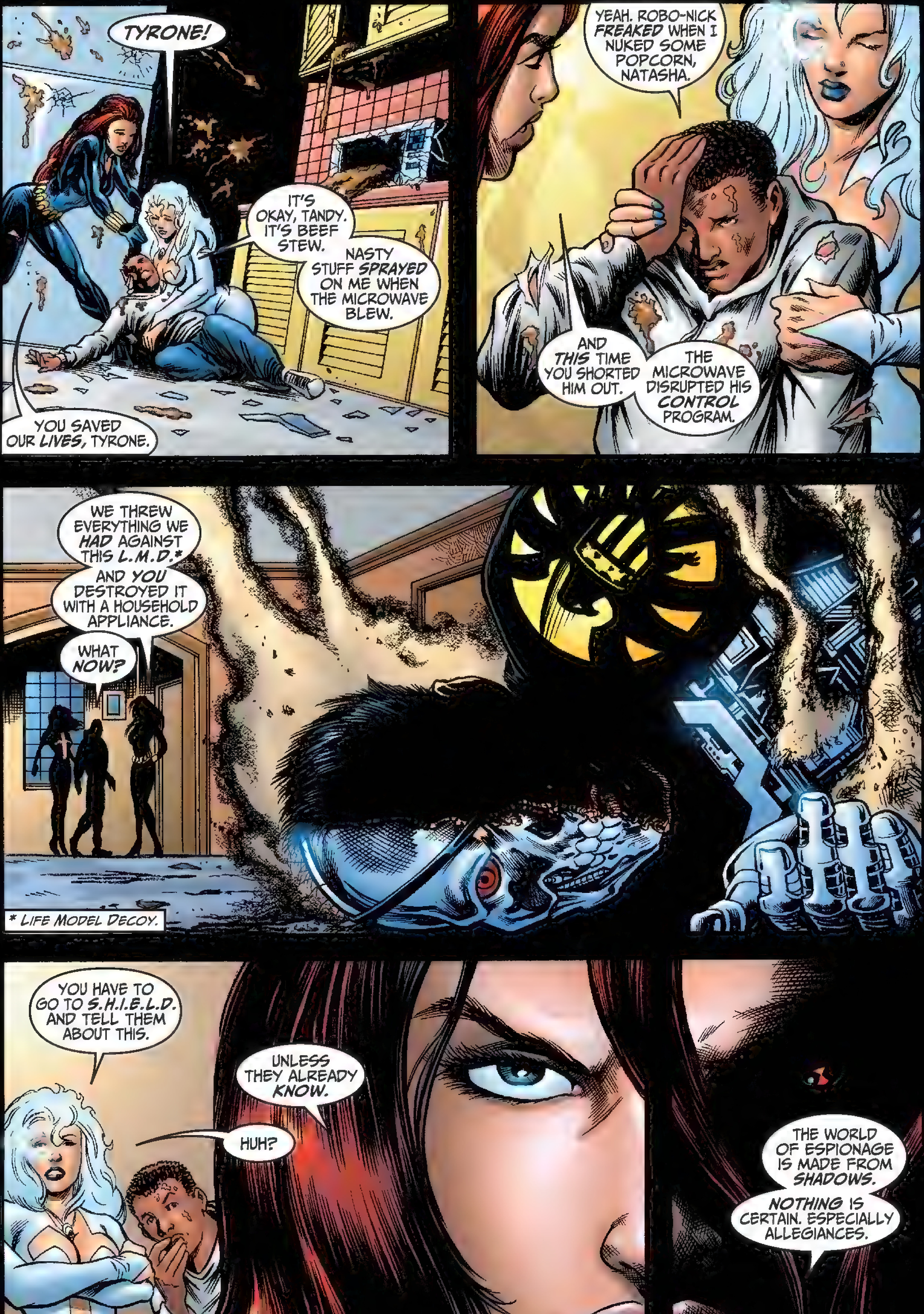
"A... GUY LIKE YOU COULD BE *USEFUL*, VERMIN."
THE ENTIRE *BUILDING* IS SHAKING!
SOME KIND OF -- UH-- *EARTHQUAKE?*
AN ARMY OF *KUNG-FU* MOTHERS AND NOW THIS.
I'D SAY SHANG WAS *RIGHT* ABOUT HIS DADDY--
"THE OLD MAN HAS A PLAN *B*."
ONE WAY
ONE WAY
*RUN*, YOU MINDLESS OAF!
OUR DEATHS ARE NOT A *PART* OF THE MASTER'S DESIGNS.
MERCIFUL ONE, YOUR HAND REACHES EVEN *HERE* TO SMITE YOUR FOES.
AS I SEE, MR. LOO.

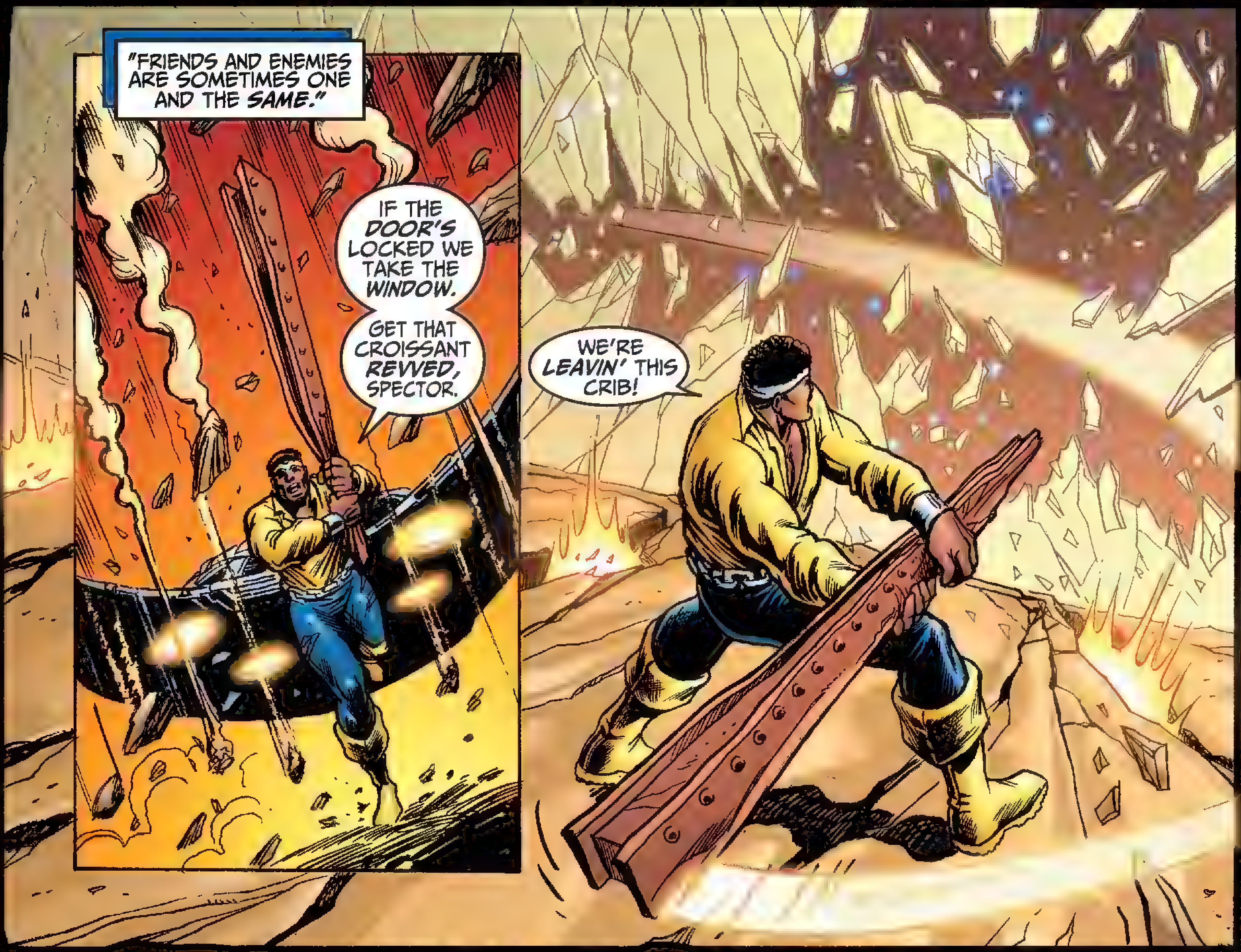
I *REGRET* THIS OVERT SHOW OF FORCE.
I PREFER TO ACT IN SECRECY.
IMPATIENCE IS A HUMAN FAULT I *SELDOM* INDULGE IN.
MY DESIRE TO SEE MY SON, SHANG-CHI, SLAIN HAS BEEN TOO *OFTEN* THWARTED.

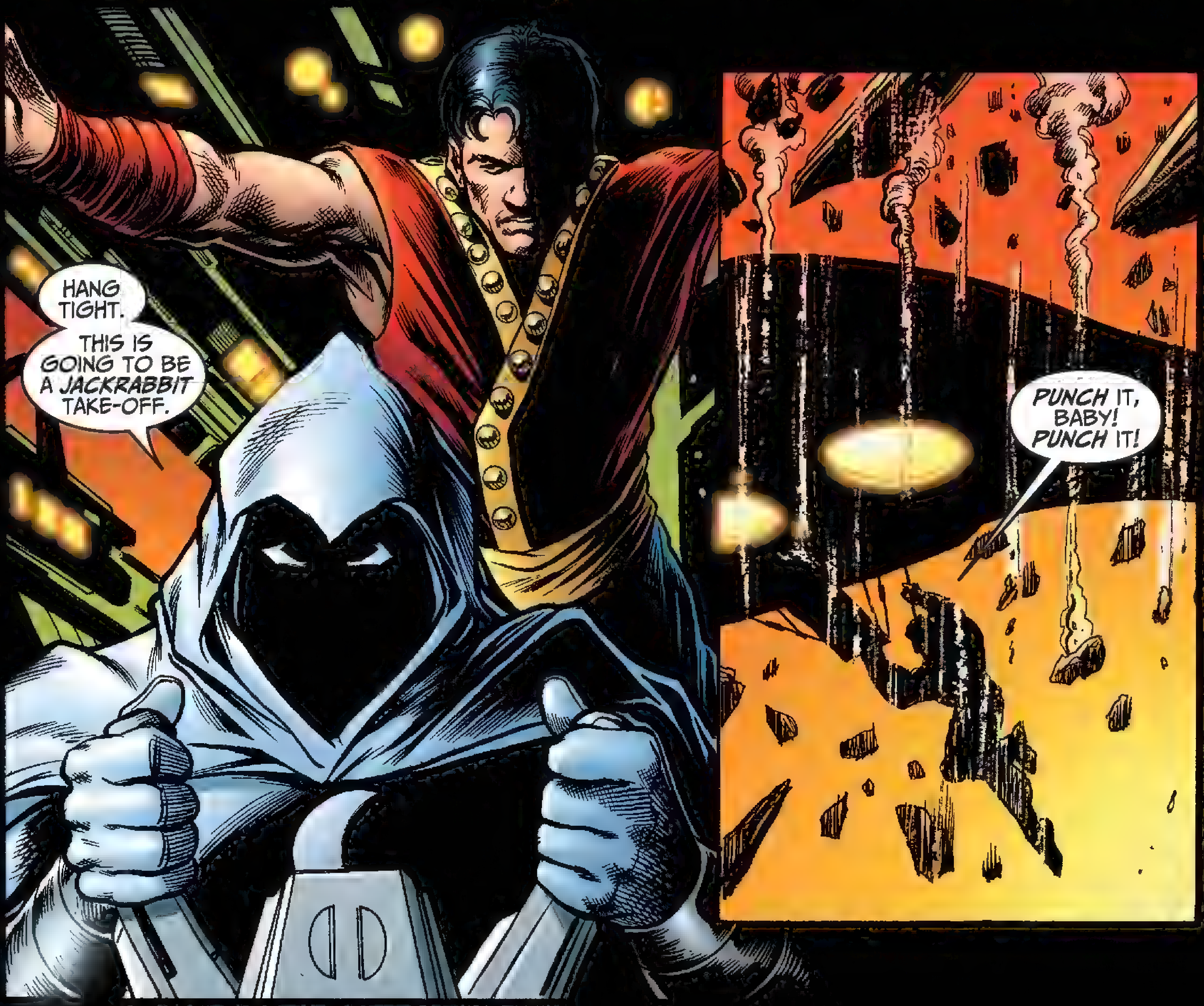
I ONLY WISH TO BE CERTAIN OF HIS DEMISE, MR. LOO.
MR. LOO?
WELL, HIS SILENCE IS ONLY CONFIRMATION.
DESTRUCTION IS TOTAL. NOTHING THAT *LIVES* ESCAPES SPECTOR TOWER.
NOW I MAY PROCEED WITH MY GRANDER SCHEMES...
THE CRESCENT-- MY COPTER--
YOU CAN'T PILOT THAT THING, SPECTOR. YOU CAN BARELY *WALK.*
NO TIME FOR *DEBATE,* DAREDEVIL.

THE TOWER IS BUILT ON A CENTER SPIRE, BUILT TO COLLAPSE IN ON ITSELF IN CASE OF AN EARTHQUAKE.
IN A ***HEARTBEAT*** THIS WHOLE FLOOR BECOMES AN EXPRESS ELEVATOR HEADING DOWN.
BUT ALL OF THESE UNCONSCIOUS DACOITS--
"AND I SHALL NOT STOP UNTIL I STAND FACE-TO-FACE WITH MY FATHER."
I DIDN'T INVITE 'EM, DD!
SHOW ME THE WAY *OUT*, SPECTOR!
YOU *COMIN'*, SHANG, M'MAN?
I FOLLOW, LUKE CAGE.
SHANG-CHI...

THIS IS AN AUTOMATED SECURITY BUILDING.
NO SPECTOR INC. EMPLOYEES OR TENANTS ARE IN THE BUILDING.
GREAT NEWS.
IF WE *DIE*, IT'S WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE.
A FITTING DEATH FOR ONE WHO CALLS HIMSELF *"HERO."*
YEAH, WELL, I MIGHTA LIKED BEIN' AN *OLD* HERO.
NO...
RRRRRR
I DON'T LIKE THE *SOUND* OF THAT.
THE TREMOR STRESSED THE BUILDING.
THE ROOF HATCH IS *JAMMED*.
"WE'RE NOT GOING *ANYWHERE*."
HE-- HE'S *DEAD!*


TYRONE!
IT'S OKAY, TANDY. IT'S BEEF STEW.
NASTY STUFF SPRAYED ON ME WHEN THE MICROWAVE BLEW.
YOU SAVED OUR LIVES, TYRONE.
YEAH. ROBO-NICK FREAKED WHEN I NUKED SOME POPCORN, NATASHA.
AND THIS TIME YOU SHORTED HIM OUT.
THE MICROWAVE DISRUPTED HIS CONTROL PROGRAM.
WE THREW EVERYTHING WE HAD AGAINST THIS L.M.D.*
AND YOU DESTROYED IT WITH A HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCE.
WHAT NOW?
* LIFE MODEL DECOY.
YOU HAVE TO GO TO S.H.I.E.L.D. AND TELL THEM ABOUT THIS.
UNLESS THEY ALREADY KNOW.
HUH?
THE WORLD OF ESPIONAGE IS MADE FROM SHADOWS.
NOTHING IS CERTAIN. ESPECIALLY ALLEGIANCES.


"FRIENDS AND ENEMIES ARE SOMETIMES ONE AND THE *SAME*."
IF THE *DOOR'S* LOCKED WE TAKE THE *WINDOW*.
GET THAT CROISSANT *REVVED*, SPECTOR.
WE'RE *LEAVIN'* THIS CRIB!


HANG TIGHT.
THIS IS GOING TO BE A *JACKRABBIT* TAKE-OFF.
*PUNCH* IT, BABY! *PUNCH* IT!

WE'RE *JUST* GOING TO... CLEAR.
"JUST PRAY THE *DEBRIS* DOESN'T CHOKE THE TURBOS."
WE'RE *THROUGH,* SPECTOR!
AND ALL OUR TROUBLES ARE *BEHIND* US!

I NEVER *DID* LIKE THE IDEA OF HAVING A HEADQUARTERS.
THAT'S *COLD,* DD.
THE MAN LOST HIS *PAD,* HIS BUSINESS.
HE'S *ALIVE.* HE CAN REBUILD.
IN THE END ALL THAT MATTERS IS SURVIVAL.
WELL, I'D LIKE TO HEAR ***SPECTOR'S*** OPINION...
...WHEN HE WAKES *UP.*
ANYONE HERE KNOW HOW TO *FLY* THIS RIDE?
*I* CAN HANDLE IT, LUKE.
YOU SURE, *D?* YOU'RE NOT EVEN LOOKING WHERE YOU'RE *GOIN'.*
HAVE A LITTLE *FAITH,* CAGE.
***ME?***

"ONLY THING I HAVE FAITH IN IS--
"--JUST WHEN YOU THINK THINGS CAN'T GET WORSE--
"--THEY *DO.*"

GOTHAM COMICS
ARE YOU *SURE* ABOUT THIS, NATASHA?
WHAT *SHOULD* WE DO?
SHOULD I WAIT UNTIL *ANOTHER* KILLER ROBOT INVADES MY HOME?
BUT DO *I* HAVE TO COME ALONG?
YOU'RE THE *KEY* TO THIS, TANDY.
I'M NOT SO *SURE*...
THE LADY HAS A *POINT*, TAND'.
THANKS FOR THE *MORAL* SUPPORT, TYRONE.
I WOULD THINK YOU'D *WANT* ANSWERS, TANDY. FOR *TYRONE'S* SAKE.
I GUESS.

IT'S JUST THAT ALL THIS *SPY* STUFF IS KIND OF SCARY.
SILLY. *I'M* A SPY. DO I SCARE YOU?
*SOMETIMES?* YEAH.
I MEAN, THAT NICK FURY WHO WAS VISITING US... HE WAS NEVER THE *REAL* NICK FURY.
RIGHT.
SO, DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S *SCARY?*
THAT'S WHY WE'RE GOING RIGHT TO *S.H.I.E.L.D.* FOR ANSWERS.

HEY, MAN. CAN YOU HANDLE A COUPLE *VISITORS?*
LUKE... SHANG...
THIS IS MARLENE, MY...
THE *LOVE* OF HIS LIFE.
RIGHT...
HOW YOU *DOING,* SPECTOR?
LOST SOME BLOOD. THEY WANT TO KEEP AN *EYE* ON ME FOR A FEW DAYS.
RARE ARE THE MEN WHO HAVE FACED ZARAN AND LIVED.
I BARELY DID *THAT.*
TAKE MORE THAN *THAT* FREAK TO BRING YOU DOWN. YOU'LL BE UP FIGHTIN' IN *NO* TIME.
THAT I'M NOT SO *SURE* ABOUT.
HUH?

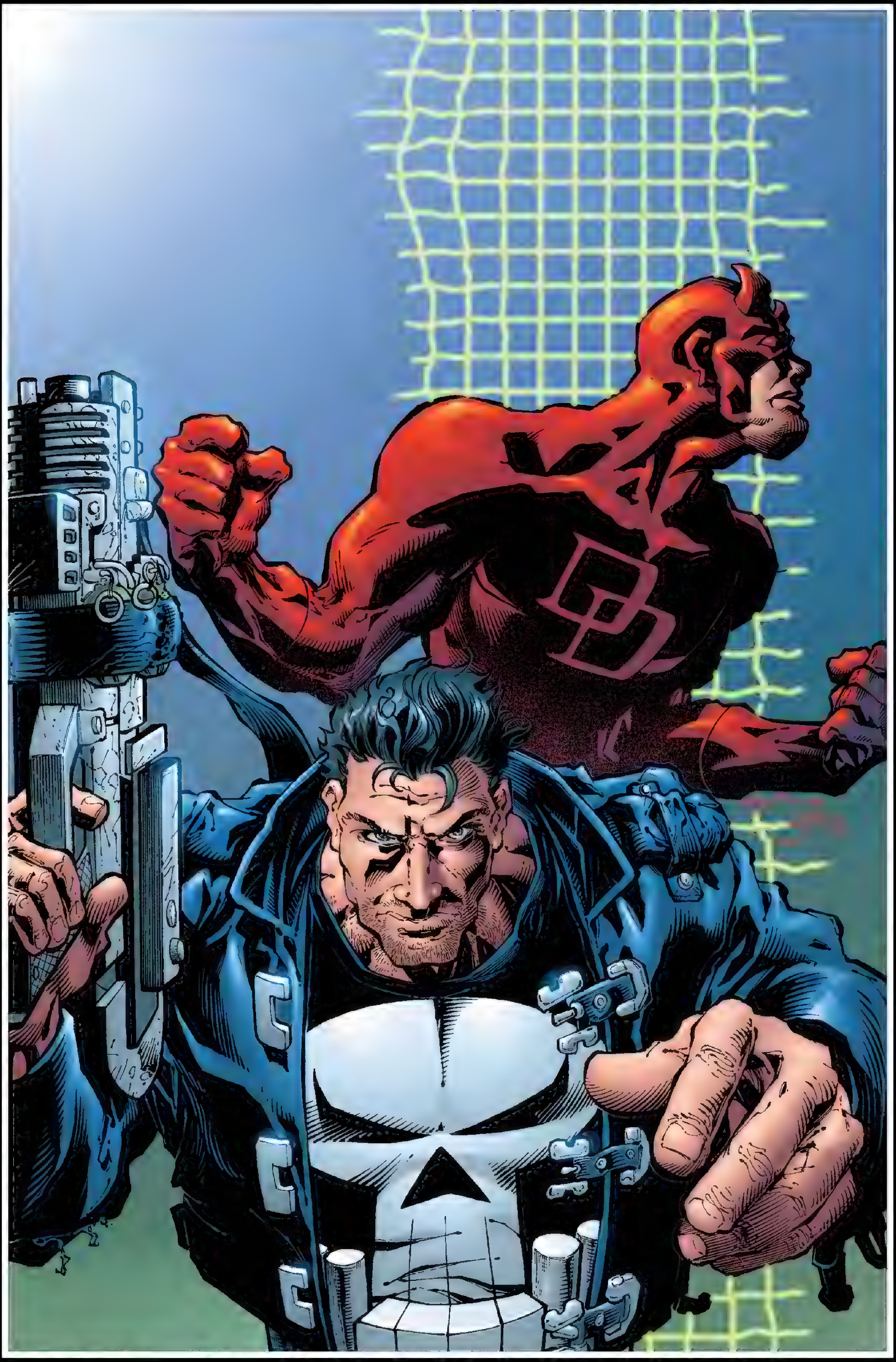
YOU KNOW HOW MUCH THAT BUILDING COST?
I'D RATHER FACE A ROOMFUL OF ZARANS THAN MY STOCKHOLDERS.
I'M OUT OF THIS LITTLE CLUB, FRIENDS.
I HATE TO SAY THIS, BUT THIS TEAM IS A TROUBLE MAGNET.
I'VE GOT ENOUGH ON MY PLATE WITHOUT TAKING ON SOMEONE ELSE'S PROBLEMS.
YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
HE'S SURE.
IT IS A WISE WARRIOR WHO KNOWS WHEN TO LEAVE THE FIELD.
MOON KNIGHT RETIRES?
WE HAVE NO HANGOUT NOW.
AND YOU HAVE NO BENEFACTOR.
YEAH. NO PAYCHECK.
SO YOU WILL LEAVE US?
NAW. I GUESS I GO -- WHAT DO LAWYERS CALL IT? PRO BONO.

"I KNOW *SOMEBODY* WHO'S GONNA BE HAPPY ABOUT THAT."
SNIF SNIF

FURY!
NATASHA, WHAT IN SAM HILL ARE YOU *DOING* HERE? YOU CAN'T JUST --
MY APOLOGIES, COLONEL FURY... DIRECTOR CARTER.
THERE *ARE* CHANNELS, AGENT ROMANOV.
YOU'LL *UNDERSTAND* MY ABRUPT ENTRANCE WHEN I'VE EXPLAINED.
AN ATTACK ON ME HAS UNCOVERED A CONSPIRACY AIMED AT *S.H.I.E.L.D.*
NATASHA...
NOT *NOW*, DAGGER.
I THINK THIS CONSPIRACY ORIGINATES *HERE*.

IT VERY NEARLY *KILLED* DAGGER AND ME.
THIS DRIVE INSIDE THE MACHINE IS OF *S.H.I.E.L.D.* MANUFACTURE.
THE *L.M.D.* CAME FROM *HERE?*
UH...
I COULDN'T TRUST ANY KIND OF COMMUNICATION *OTHER* THAN FACE TO FACE.
WHAT *FORM* DOES THIS CONSPIRACY TAKE?
AN *L.M.D.* THAT WAS A *DOUBLE* FOR COLONEL FURY.
I THINK THAT'S THE CASE, COLONEL.
AND WHO IS THIS *WITH YOU?* IS SHE *AUTHORIZED?*
I *VOUCH* FOR DAGGER. SHE'S HERE BECAUSE OF HER UNIQUE *ABILITIES.*
THE *L.M.D.s* ARE SOPHISTICATED DUPLICATES, ALMOST *IMPOSSIBLE* TO DETECT WITHOUT EXTENSIVE TESTS.
UM...
DAGGER IS ABLE TO DETECT HUMAN *SOULS.*

NO *L.M.D.* CAN HIDE FROM HER.
IS *ANYONE* IN THIS ROOM AN *L.M.D.*, DAGGER?
WELL, ACTUALLY...
...THEY *ALL* ARE.



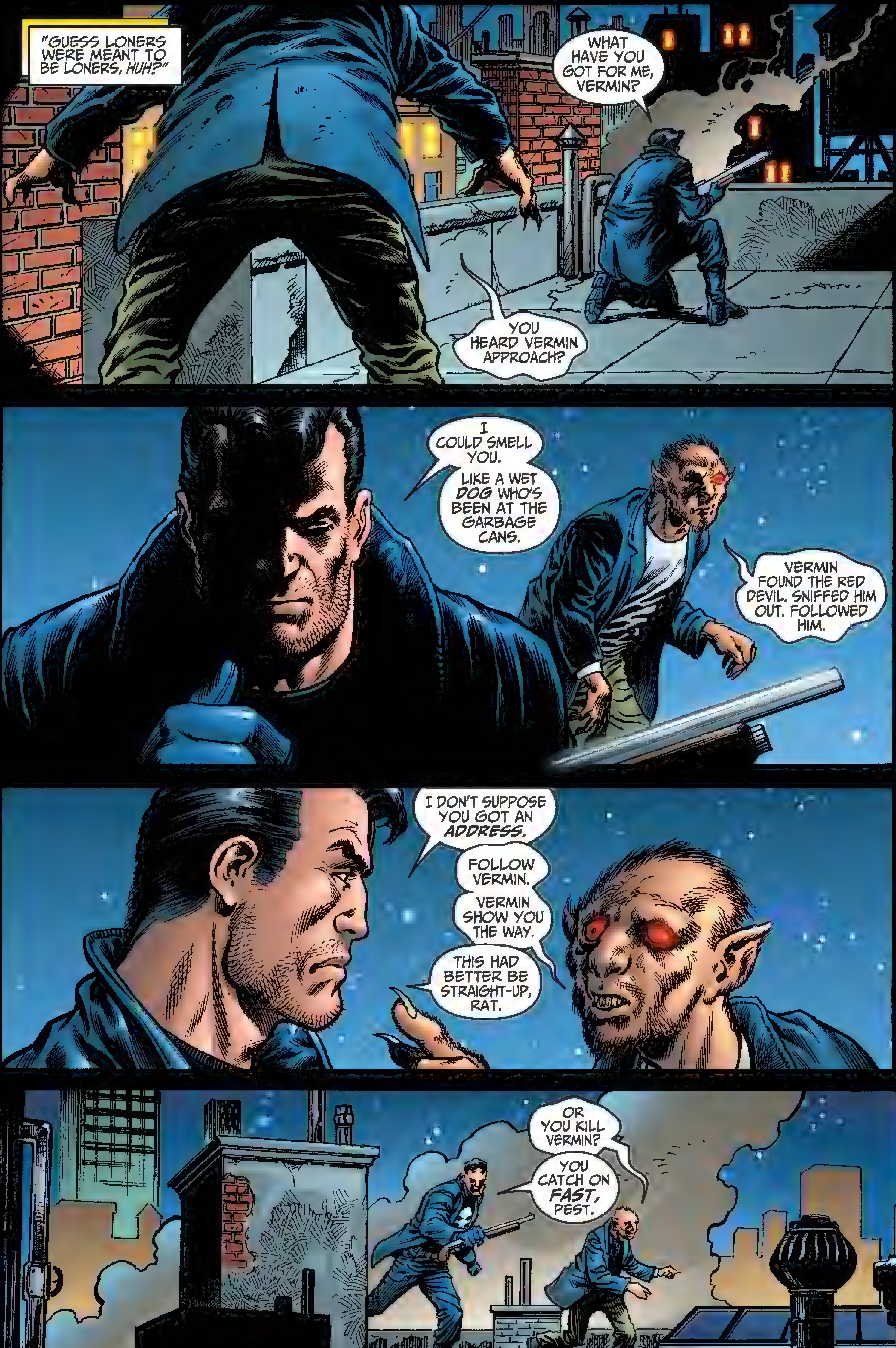
# 15

THE UNREAL WORLD
HOW CAN THEY *ALL* BE LIFE MODEL DECOYS, DAGGER?
WHAT ELSE *CAN* THEY BE, NATASHA? THEY DON'T HAVE *SOULS*.
HOLD ON A DAMN *MINUTE*, WIDOW...

THEN WHERE ARE THE *REAL* FURY AND S.H.I.E.L.D. DIRECTOR CARTER?
I DON'T *KNOW*, NATASHA! I'M JUST ALONG FOR THE RIDE, REMEMBER?
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO *DO?*
WE *BARELY* TOOK OUT THE ROBOT FURY THAT ATTACKED YOU AT YOUR APARTMENT!
WE'RE OUTNUMBERED AND YOUR SOUL DAGGERS ARE *USELESS.*
PICK UP A GUN AND START *SHOOTING!*
I DON'T LIKE ROBOTS...
I DON'T LIKE GUNS...

URRRRRT
WOW! I HIT THEM!
TRY AIMING THIS TIME!
AND FOLLOW ME!
DOES ANYONE HERE HAVE A PULSE, DAGGER?
WE'RE THE ONLY SOULS ON BOARD.
WONDERFUL. TRAPPED WITH AN ARMY OF KILLING MACHINES...
...TEN THOUSAND FEET OVER NEW YORK.

"I HOPE THE *REST* OF THE GROUP'S HAVING A QUIET EVENING."
IT WAS MOST GRACIOUS FOR YOU TO INVITE ME TO DINNER, LUKE.
GONNA HAVE T'TAKE YOUR ***WORD*** ON THAT, SHANG.
'CAUSE YOU HARDLY ***TOUCHED*** YOUR BARBECUE.
I SELDOM EAT MEAT. THIS SHREDDED VEGETABLE DISH --
THAT'S COLESLAW.
IT IS SUFFICIENT.
SAME WAY ***DANNY*** USED TO EAT.
DANGED IF I KNOW HOW HE COULD BE *"IRON FIST."* MAN ATE LIKE A ***RABBIT.***
WHAT'RE YOU GONNA ***DO,*** SHANG? YOU THOUGHT ABOUT IT?
I WILL LEAVE THIS CITY. MY FATHER BELIEVES ME DEAD. BUT NOT FOR LONG.
WHEN HE REALIZES HIS ERROR, ALL ABOUT ME WILL BE IN DANGER.
I WILL GO TO HIM. I WILL FACE HIM.
IF I AM SKILLED ENOUGH I WILL ***STOP*** HIM.
SEEMS LIKE THIS LITTLE BAND OF HEROES IS BUSTIN' UP BEFORE IT EVEN GOT ***STARTED.***
***ALWAYS*** THAT WAY WITH ME.


"GUESS LONERS WERE MEANT TO BE LONERS, *HUH?*"
WHAT HAVE YOU GOT FOR ME, VERMIN?
YOU HEARD VERMIN APPROACH?
I COULD SMELL YOU.
LIKE A WET *DOG* WHO'S BEEN AT THE GARBAGE CANS.
VERMIN FOUND THE RED DEVIL. SNIFFED HIM OUT. FOLLOWED HIM.
I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU GOT AN *ADDRESS.*
FOLLOW VERMIN.
VERMIN SHOW YOU THE WAY.
THIS HAD BETTER BE STRAIGHT-UP, RAT.
OR YOU KILL VERMIN?
YOU CATCH ON *FAST,* PEST.

EW! GUNS!
THEY'RE *EMPTY* ANYWAY.
THIS WAY, DAGGER.
YOU'RE *CERTAIN* THAT EVERYONE ON BOARD IS AN AUTOMATON?
EVERYONE WE'VE *RUN* INTO. BUT THEY'RE NOT PAYING ANY ATTENTION TO US.
THAT WON'T LAST.
SEE?
DON'T THEY HAVE AN "OFF" SWITCH?
NOTHING LIKE THAT. BUT IT SEEMS THEY *ARE* CENTRALLY CONTROLLED.
WHOA!

THAT MEANS THAT THERE'S A WAY TO SHUT THEM *DOWN.*
IF ONLY WE CAN *FIND* IT...
FZZZSSK
*...SOMEWHERE* IN THIS FLYING BARN.
THE HELICARRIER'S *DEPRESSURIZING!*
WE'LL LOSE ALTITUDE AND A FEW OF OUR *PURSUERS!*
IS NEARLY KILLING *US* PART OF THE PLAN?
IT'S A *RUSSIAN* THING, DAGGER.

IT'S CALLED "SCORCHED EARTH."
IT DEFEATED NAPOLEON AND HITLER.
OKAY, SO WILL THIS THING *CRASH* NOW?
NO, THE CENTRAL SYSTEM CONTROLLING THE *L.M.D.S.* WILL LEVEL US OUT.
IF I'M RIGHT WE SHOULD FIND THE *MAINFRAME* JUST AHEAD.
7
WE'LL BE SAFE IN HERE FOR NOW.
WHAT *IS* THIS PLACE?
THIS IS WHERE ALL OF THE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS FOR THE CARRIER COME TOGETHER.
I'M HOPING I CAN *LEARN* SOMETHING.
LIKE *WHAT?*
LIKE WHETHER THE *L.M.D.S.* KILLED THE AGENTS THEY REPLACED LIKE THEY *TRIED* TO KILL ME!
ACCORDING TO THIS, FURY, DIRECTOR CARTER, SITWELL AND SOME OF THE OTHER AGENTS WE SAW ARE AWAY ON ASSIGNMENTS.
SO WHY KILL *ME?* WHY NOT JUST SEND ME *AWAY* TO REPLACE ME?

HOLD ON. WHAT'S THIS?
I AM CELINE.
IT'S CELINE.
BUT WHAT IS CELINE?
COMPUTER ELIMINATION LOCATION INTELLIGENCE NEGATION ENGINE.
I WAS DESIGNED TO ELIMINATE SECURITY LEAKS WITHIN S.H.I.E.L.D.'S NETWORK.
I DID THIS WITH MAXIMUM EFFICIENCY...
...BUT FOUND SECURITY RISKS BEYOND MY SYSTEM PARAMETERS.
I DON'T LIKE WHERE THIS IS GOING.
NATASHA, SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR!
THEY ARE HERE AT MY COMMAND. YOU ARE A SECURITY RISK, NATASHA ROMANOV.
SECURITY RISK?
NATASHA?
YOU ARE EX-RUSSIAN INTELLIGENCE. A HIGH-RANKING OFFICER AND A FORMER ENEMY OF THIS ORGANIZATION.
YOUR LOYALTY CAN NEVER BE FULLY RELIED UPON.
NATASHA!

MEATS
Jimmy
DELI
YOUR DAD'S ONE **BAD** DUDE, HUH?
HE IS FAR **MORE** THAN THAT, LUKE CAGE.
HE IS **EVIL** GIVEN HUMAN FORM.
HIS IS AN EGO THAT WILL NOT SUFFER A WILL OTHER THAN HIS **OWN.**
HE MEANS TO CONTROL THE WORLD TO HIS OWN ENDS. TO **REACH** THOSE ENDS HE WOULD SACRIFICE MILLIONS.
EVEN HIS OWN **KID?**
HE SEES THE BLOOD BETWEEN US ONLY AS A **THREAT** TO HIS SCHEMES.
SOUNDS LIKE A BIG JOB GOING UP AGAINST HIM. YOU MIGHT NEED SOMEONE TO WATCH YOUR **BACK,** SHANG.
I KNOW HOW TO **HANDLE** THOSE KUNG-FU CATS FROM HANGIN' WITH IRON FIST.
NO.
I HAVE HAD **ENOUGH** INNOCENT BLOOD ON MY HANDS.
IT IS **MY** FIGHT.

THIS IS WHERE HE IS?
THE DARK PLACE BELOW. VERMIN SAW HIM GO IN.
OKAY. SCAT. I'LL *FIND* YOU IF YOU'RE LYING.
BUT DON'T MAKE ME LOOK *TOO* HARD, OR--
VERMIN KNOWS. VERMIN HEARS.
I SHOULD MAKE THE ANIMAL GO IN FIRST.
BUT WHY WARN THE ALTAR BOY?
HE'S HARD ENOUGH TO SURPRISE AS IT IS.

THIS PLACE IS EMPTY.
HAS BEEN FOR A LONG TIME.
DAREDEVIL.
NEVER SEND AN ANIMAL TO DO A *MAN'S* JOB, FRANK.
I'VE BEEN GAMED.
I COULD *SMELL* HIM.
WHEN I LED HIM HERE AND HE RAN OFF... I SMELLED *YOU*.
UNNH!

THEY'RE WEARING INSULATED ARMOR. MY STING WON'T *WORK* ON THEM!
THEN THAT'S *ALL* SHE WROTE, RIGHT?
NO.
WE *FIGHT!*
URRRRRT
DOWN!
UH!

COMMAND FOUR!
THEY'RE NOT KILLING US!
THEY CAN'T. WE'RE IN THE NERVE CENTER OF THE HELICARRIER.
CELINE IS HOLDING A GUN TO HER OWN HEAD.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
THERE ARE MORE WAYS THAN ONE TO DISPOSE OF YOU, BLACK WIDOW.
WITHOUT KILLING YOURSELF?
OKAY, SO WE'RE ALIVE FOR NOW. BUT HOW DO WE GET OUT OF HERE?
ONE THING AT A TIME, TANDY.

FUNNY, ISN'T IT? I ASSEMBLE A *TEAM* TO HUNT YOU...
...AND YOU TRAP *YOURSELF*.
YOU *TRAPPED* ME, ALTAR BOY?
WHAT DO YOU --?
SPING
YOU'VE GOT *NOTHING*.
I *CAN'T* LET YOU KILL YOURSELF.
YOU CAN'T *STOP* ME.
YOU'D *DIE* RATHER THAN SEE ME WIN?
TRY ME.

YOU WON'T DO IT. IT'S JUST A *BLUFF*, CASTLE.
DO YOU REALLY THINK SO?
NO.
YOU'RE *NOT* BLUFFING.
*I WIN AGAIN.*

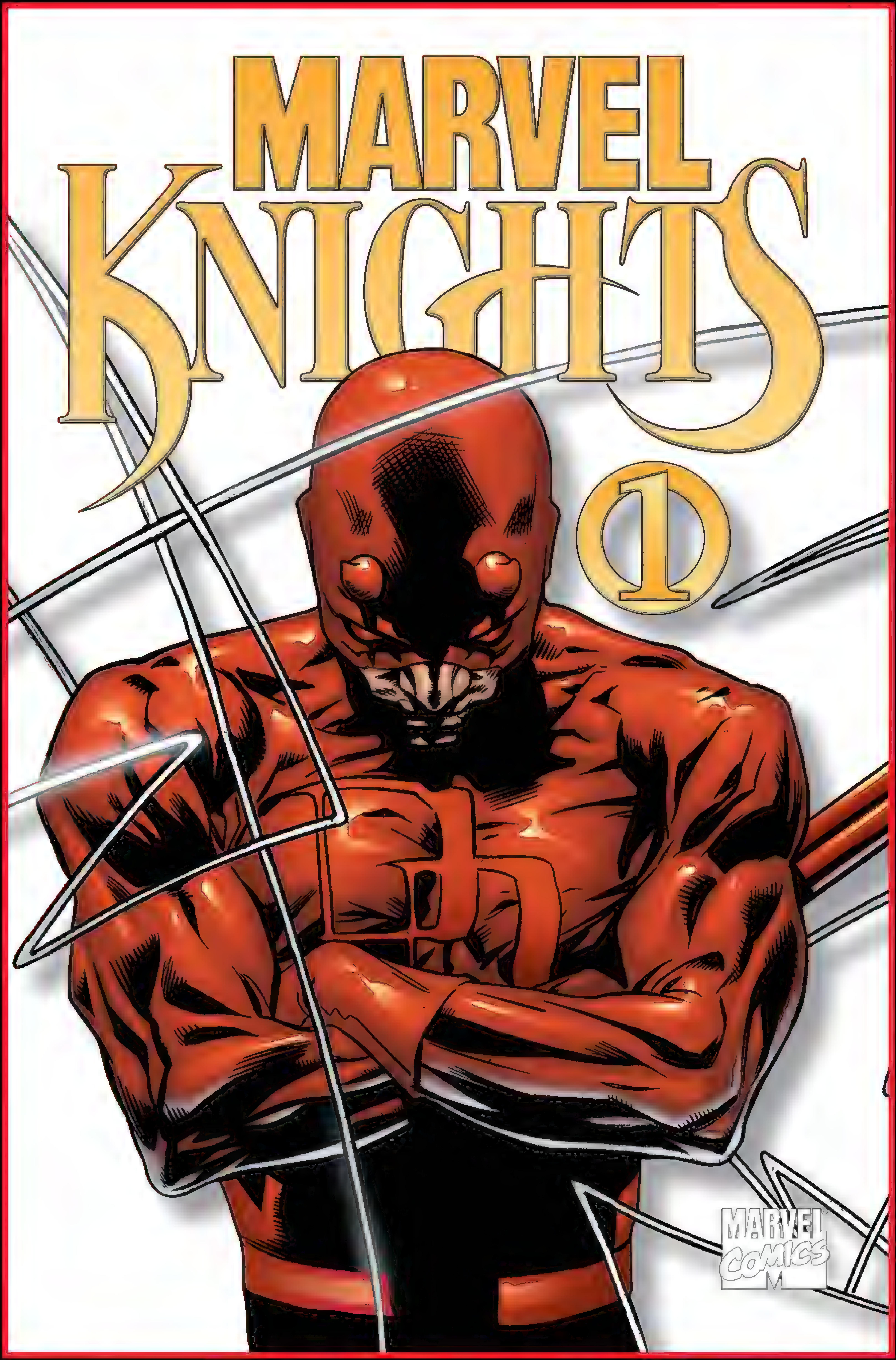
CAN'T WE JUST *LEAVE* NOW, NATASHA?
NOT *YET*, DAGGER.
WHY *NOT?* THESE ROBOTS AREN'T *MOVING.*
ONCE WE LEAVE THIS ROOM THEY'LL *REACTIVATE.*
AND I CAN'T LEAVE *CELINE* IN PLACE TO CAUSE MORE TROUBLE.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, NATASHA ROMANOV?
I'M WIPING YOUR FILE, CELINE.
QUITE IMPOSSIBLE. YOU WOULD NEED ULTRA-ULTRA CLEARANCE FOR THE NECESSARY CODE.
YOU SAID IT YOURSELF... ONCE A RUSSIAN SPY, *ALWAYS* A RUSSIAN SPY.
YOUR FORMER MASTERS COULD NOT HAVE HAD ACCESS TO THE SHIELD MASTER CODES.

WE NEVER *UTILIZED* THEM. BUT ALL THE TOP AGENTS HAD THEM.
*UH... IS THAT POISON GAS?*
*MERELY EXHAUST FROM THE HELICARRIER'S ENGINES.*
*I ROUTED IT TO THIS ROOM.*
DON'T *DISTRACT* ME, TANDY.
THE ACCESS CODE *VARIES* DEPENDING ON DATE AND TIME. I HAVE TO CALCULATE IT IN MY HEAD...
I'LL TRY TO... FAINT AS... QUIETLY AS POSSIBLE...
THREE THREE FOUR CEE--
NO... NINE FOUR *DEE* --
*MY CALCULATIONS SHOW THAT YOU HAVE LESS THAN SIXTY SECONDS OF BREATHABLE AIR AND--*
*THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE!*
SYSTEM OVERRIDE
DIZZY...
JUST A FEW MORE SECONDS.
COMPLETING ELIMINATION PROCESS...

WAIT! WE CAN WORK OUT A COMPROMISE.
DELETING PROGRAM
I CAN MODIFY MY PROGRAMS.
DELETING PROGRAM
DO NOT ERASE
DELETING PROGRAM
THE HELICARRIER!
IT'S A PROJECTION!
IT WAS ALL AN ILLUSION. A SET-UP TO TRAP ME.
SO... WHERE TO NOW, 'TASHA?
WE GO BACK TO MY CAR.
THEN HOME.

SO, THERE ARE LOTS OF THOSE ROBOT GUYS?
NOT ANYMORE, TYRONE.
NATASHA CALLED S.H.I.E.L.D. CENTRAL AND THEY SENT A BUNCH OF AGENTS TO CLEAN UP THE MESS.
SO EVERYTHING'S BACK TO NORMAL, TANDY?
AS NORMAL AS IT GETS AROUND HERE.
ENJOY IT WHILE IT LASTS.
AND HERE I THOUGHT YOU WERE RELAXING AT HOME ALL NIGHT.
DAREDEVIL!
I HEARD ABOUT YOUR TROUBLE AT SPECTOR TOWER.
TIME TO GO INSIDE, TY.
UH... SURE.
SPECTOR'S OUT. I SUPPOSE SHANG AND CAGE ARE, TOO.
IT COULDN'T LAST.

YOU'RE RIGHT, 'TASHA. IT DIDN'T SUIT *ANY* OF US.
BUT IT WAS WORTH *TRYING* ANYWAY.
THE PUNISHER IS *MY* NEMISIS. *MY* OPPOSITE NUMBER. I WAS *WRONG* TO BRING OTHERS INTO THE HUNT.
I WASN'T *MEANT* TO LEAD. I WAS MEANT TO WORK *ALONE*.
*ALWAYS* ALONE, MATT?
IT'S *BETTER* THIS WAY.
THIS WAY *I'M* THE ONE TAKING THE RISK.
THE *ONLY* ONE WHO GETS HURT.
RIGHT.
THE ONLY ONE...
THE END
DIXON + BARRETO + NELSON 01
Dave


MARVEL KNIGHTS
1
MARVEL COMICS

**JOE QUESADA, JIMMY PALMIOTTI** & AVALON'S **DAVE KEMP**

*Marvel Knights #1 variant*

# MARVEL KNIGHTS

## HOW WE GOT HERE FROM THERE

I remember seeing ads for The Avengers when the book first-came out way back when I was ten years old. I haunted the drugstore waiting for it to come in. I mean, Iron Man, Thor, the Hulk, Ant-Man and the Wasp all in one book? What's not to like? And it was by those same guys who did the Fantastic Four. An obvious instant classic.

The book finally came in. We didn't know from release dates back then. When a book showed up on the spinrack it showed up. I paid my twelve cents and read it on the sidewalk outside of the store. I was NOT disappointed. The great Marvel heroes all in one book. And Stan and Jack didn't let me down on another score; this brand new super team was made up of characters who didn't exactly get along. No Justice League sitting around making nice-nice in this book! The Hulk railed under the constraints of belonging to a group from the get-go. Thor was his usual pompous self. Iron Man tried to hold it together. And any minute somebody was gonna step on one of Ant-Man's six-legged pals. The tension DRIPPED off the pages.

This was great stuff.

And it only got worse (better) when the Hulk decided to leave the group and join the circus! Then our heroes had to hunt the big green guy down. And Namor joined in! This group couldn't hold together! There was too much turbulence and unrest here! Ant-Man had to become Giant-Man just to try to hold his own in this gang!

Then, just when the book couldn't possibly get cooler, Captain America got fished out of the sea and joined the group! I mean it, that first cover with Cap springing out in front of the Avengers with a battle cry on his lips is a core visual of my whole freaking childhood. It was like a focal point of everything I loved about comics. If this could happen, if Cap could really have returned from the mists of the Golden Age of Comics, then anything, ANYTHING was possible.

And then, after a few issues with Captain America as the leader, I lost interest in the book. I was a kid. What did I know? I thought it was because I really didn't care for the "new" Avengers. Hawkeye, Scarlet Witch and (heaven help us) Quicksilver just didn't float my boat. I drifted off to concentrate on other comics swearing never to buy an Avengers comic again.

JOE QUESADA
EDITOR

BOB HARRAS
CHIEF

Over the years when I should have been thinking of other, more serious and worthwhile things, I would wonder at what it was I didn't like about the "new" Avengers. I realized after a time that it was the fact that, with Cap as leader, a status quo came to the book. They had a headquarters. Identity cards. A private jet. A butler, for cripes sake. And if tensions did arise Cap would play the diplomat and smooth them out. Horror of horrors. They'd become the Justice League! They even started sitting around a table and gabbing about how to split up their missions.

When I came to this revelation I vowed then and there (at whatever minimum wage job I was tolerating at the time) that if I ever got to do a comic book featuring a team of super heroes (a possibility at the time as remote as my being asked to join the astronaut program or to go on tour with the Rolling Stones) I would never allow them to "get along". I'd crank up the tension every issue until it was at the breaking point. And there'd be no Captain America to mediate things.

Well, here it is. My first honest-to-gosh team book. And are these the bad boys (and girls) to help fulfill my promise or what? This group can't agree on anything. The only reason they're together is that they all hate a guy who'd never join their group in the first place! They're all tortured loners, vigilantes and misfits. And there's plenty more where they came from as I have the entire Marvel Knights imprint to range across. I've plotted out a year of this book and haven't even scratched the surface of anti-heroes, messianic do-gooders, death-wish-possessed headcases and downright scary dudes available to me.

Oh, they'll try to get along. They'll even try to have a headquarters and passwords and all that neat stuff the Avengers and FF have. Wait'll you see how THAT works out. And they'll always be thrown together by necessity rather than a desire to belong. Heck, their group won't even have a NAME.

It's gonna be a bumpy ride, month after month after month.

I'm only fulfilling a promise made many years ago by a disgruntled Seven Eleven clerk in the dead of the lonely, lonely night.

None of this angst would be possible without the tremendous patience and faith of Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti. They believed in this book even when they weren't sure if they understood what I was talking about. But I'm used to seeing that glaze come over an editor's eyes. It means I'm either on to something or seconds away from being shown to the elevators.

And I have to thank Ed Barreto and Klaus Janson, two of my favorite art talents and lunchtime conversationalists, for sharing the vision with me. These guys have the artistic chops to bring this book to life. This book's gonna sweat and bleed and blow up lots of stuff. I can't imagine better company.

I really hope you have a good time here at Marvel Knights. I know I am.

Chuck Dixon
Somewhere in Pennsylvania

Yup, it's that time again. We need a name for this letters page. Send in your suggestions and just maybe you'll get a prize.

JQ

MARVEL KNIGHTS c/o MARVEL COMICS
387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH
NEW YORK, NY 10016

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*IF YOU DON'T WANT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS PRINTED, PLEASE LET US KNOW.*
*LETTERS MAY BE EDITED FOR CONTENT AND LENGTH.*

*Marvel Knights #1 letters-page afterword by Chuck Dixon*

MARVEL KNIGHTS
MARVEL KNIGHTS
GENESIS EDITION
MARVEL COMICS

*Marvel Knights Genesis Edition* was a giveaway sketchbook that previewed Eduardo Barreto's work on the Marvel Knights series.

Writer
**Mike Raicht**

Artist
**Eduardo Barreto**

Designer
**Jeffrey Huang**

Editor
**Polly Watson**

Editor in Chief
**Bob Harras**

[redacted]

# Introduction

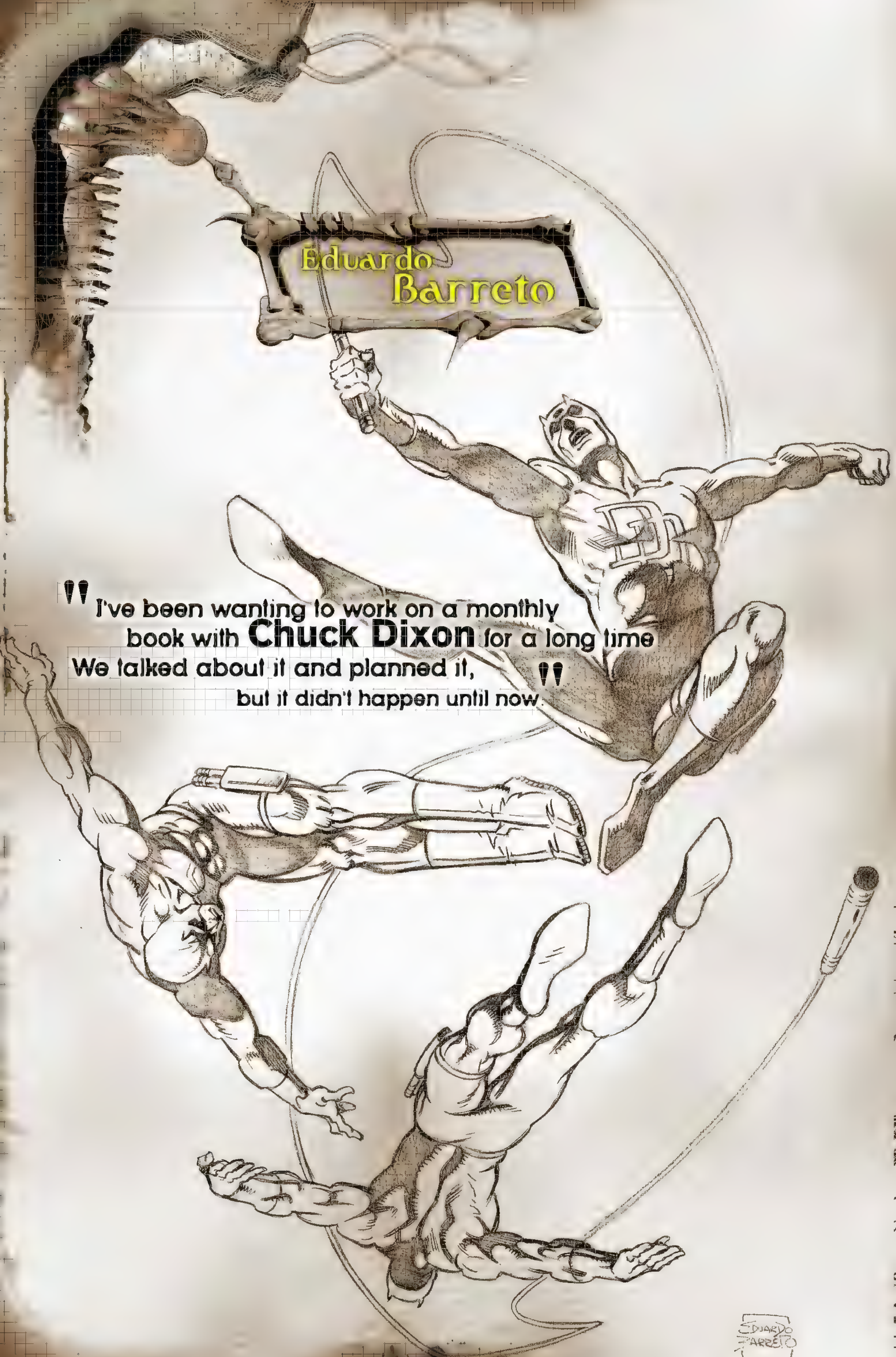
**MARVEL KNIGHTS:** the name conjures up images of the daring art and intriguing stories that have made the imprint one of the hottest in comics. Over the last few years, the KNIGHTS have given us a bold new interpretation of the Marvel Universe. We've seen DAREDEVIL become one of the most highly anticipated books on the stands, and the INHUMANS portrayed in the regal style which they so richly deserve. We've witnessed the return of the PUNISHER to his former glory and marveled at the leather-clad beauty of the BLACK WIDOW in action. And each time we've seen art that blows the competition away.

Now, there's MARVEL KNIGHTS — the series! Written by Chuck Dixon, MARVEL KNIGHTS is brought to bold, beautiful, breathtaking life by Eduardo Barreto. And in the very best tradition of the MK imprint this book is not what you're expecting! A team book that is essentially an anti-team book, MARVEL KNIGHTS features a group of fiercely independent heroes! The Punisher, Black Widow, Dr. Strange and Daredevil are not your average team players and they're sure to run into some problems the Musketeers never dreamed of. Don't expect "One for all and all for one" to cross the lips of any of the characters in this book!

We've got your first peek at this bad-a** book right here. Plunge into the gritty world of MARVEL KNIGHTS, where the best solution is not always the most heroic, but is always the most fascinating!

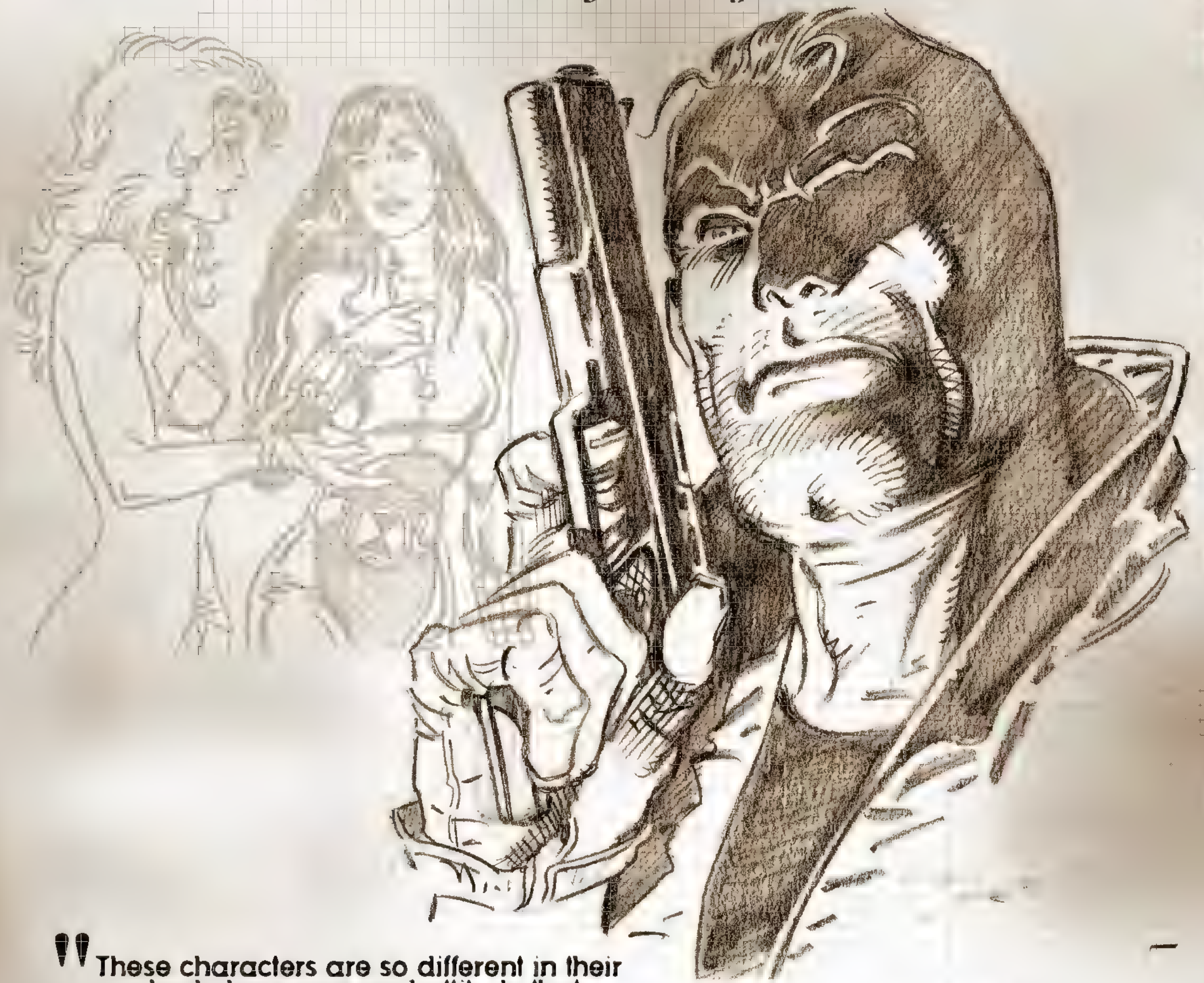
GENESIS EDITION

# Eduardo Barreto

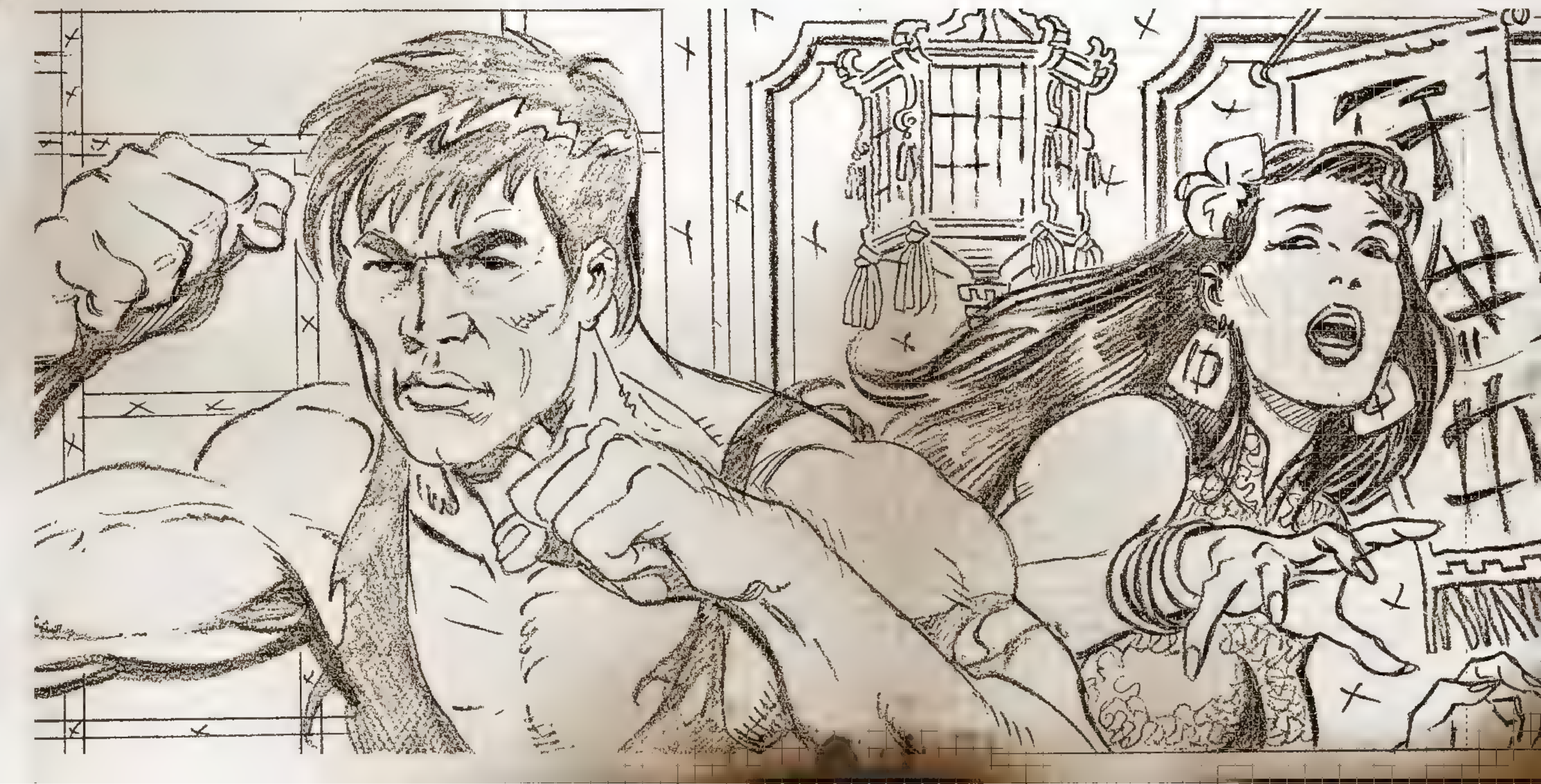


"I've been wanting to work on a monthly book with **Chuck Dixon** for a long time. We talked about it and planned it, but it didn't happen until now."

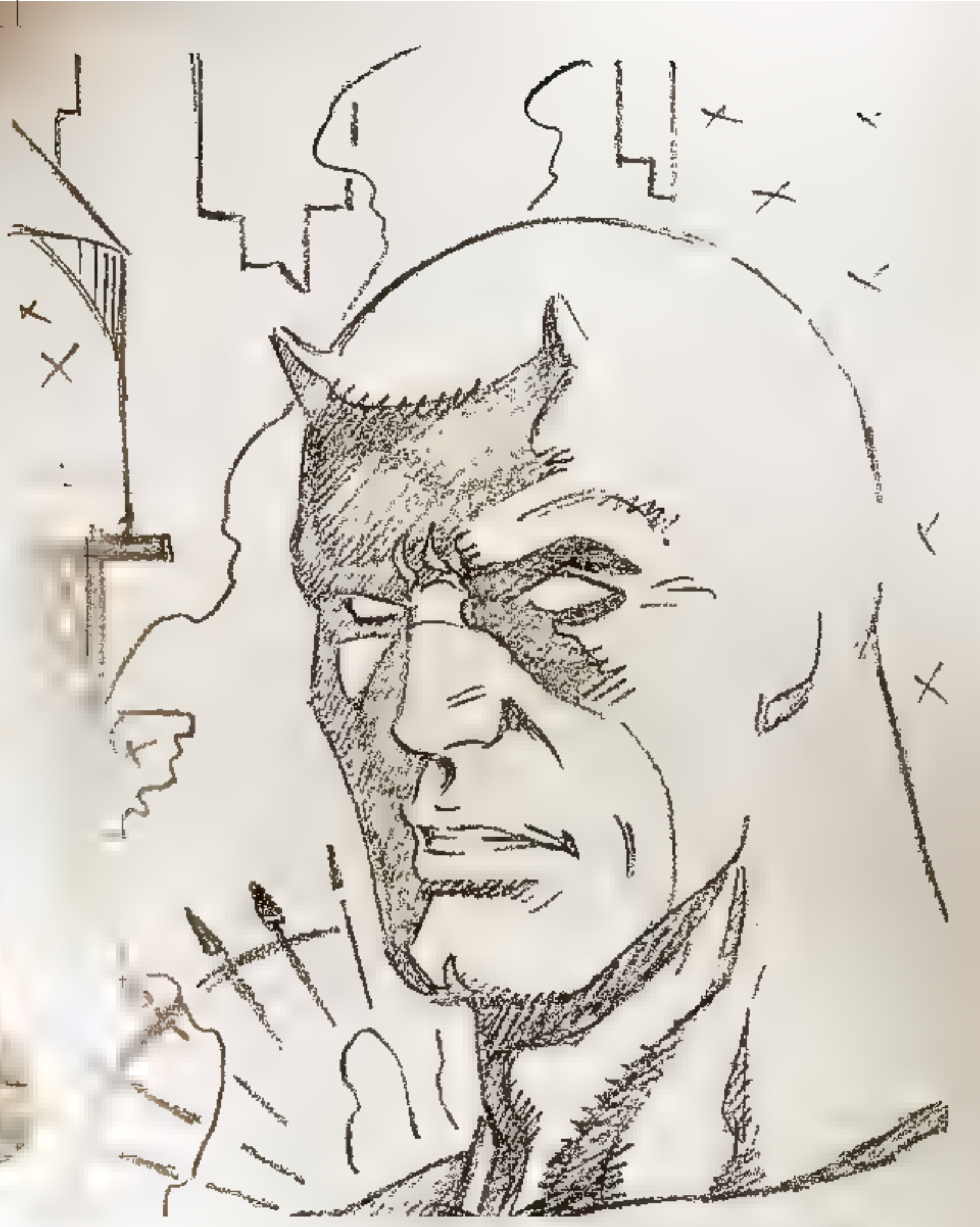
*"Being able to play with such an extended cast is very exciting."*



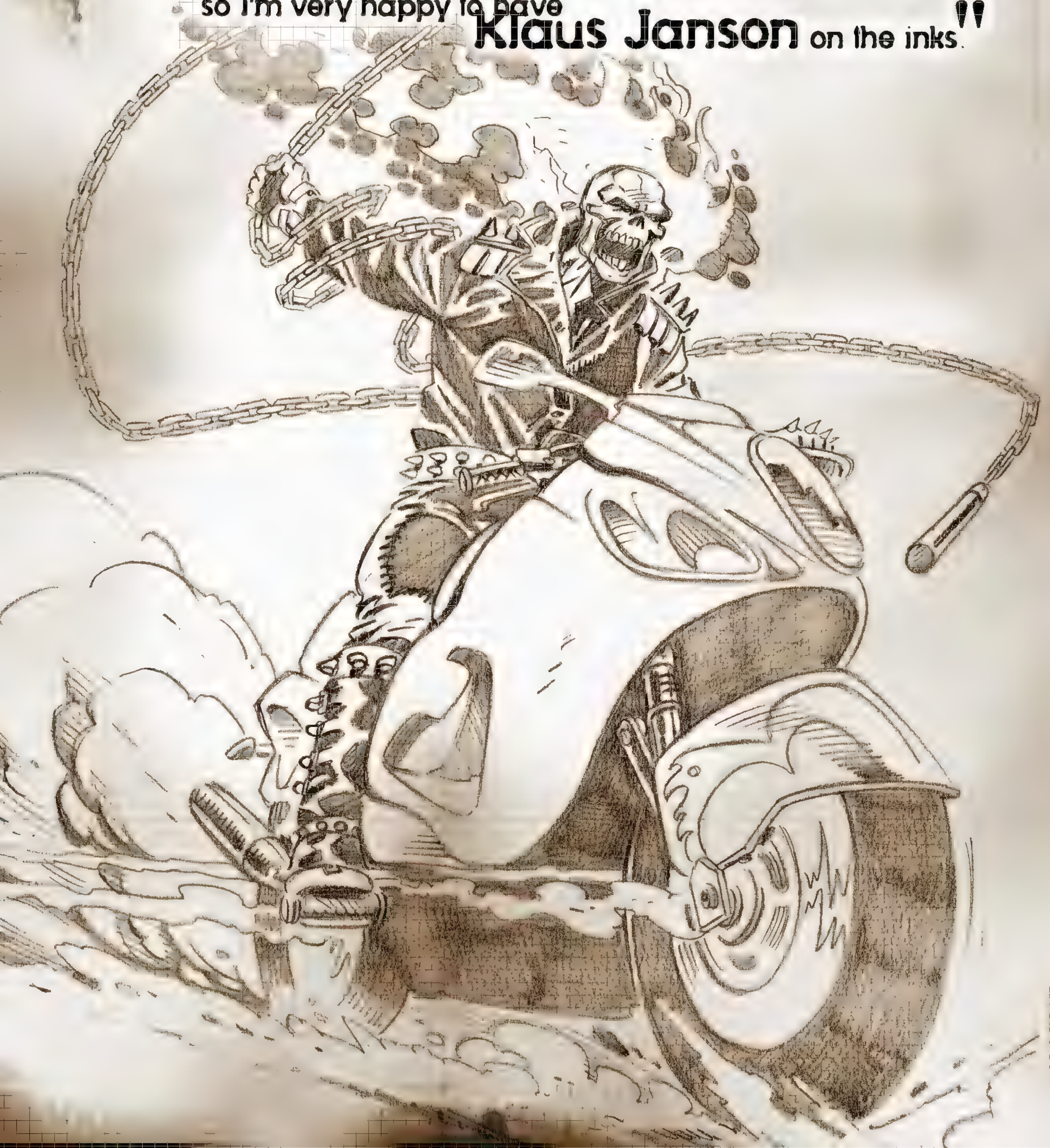
"These characters are so different in their body language and attitude that I like to think of them as the Dirty Dozen. They aren't the **Avengers** and shouldn't look that way."

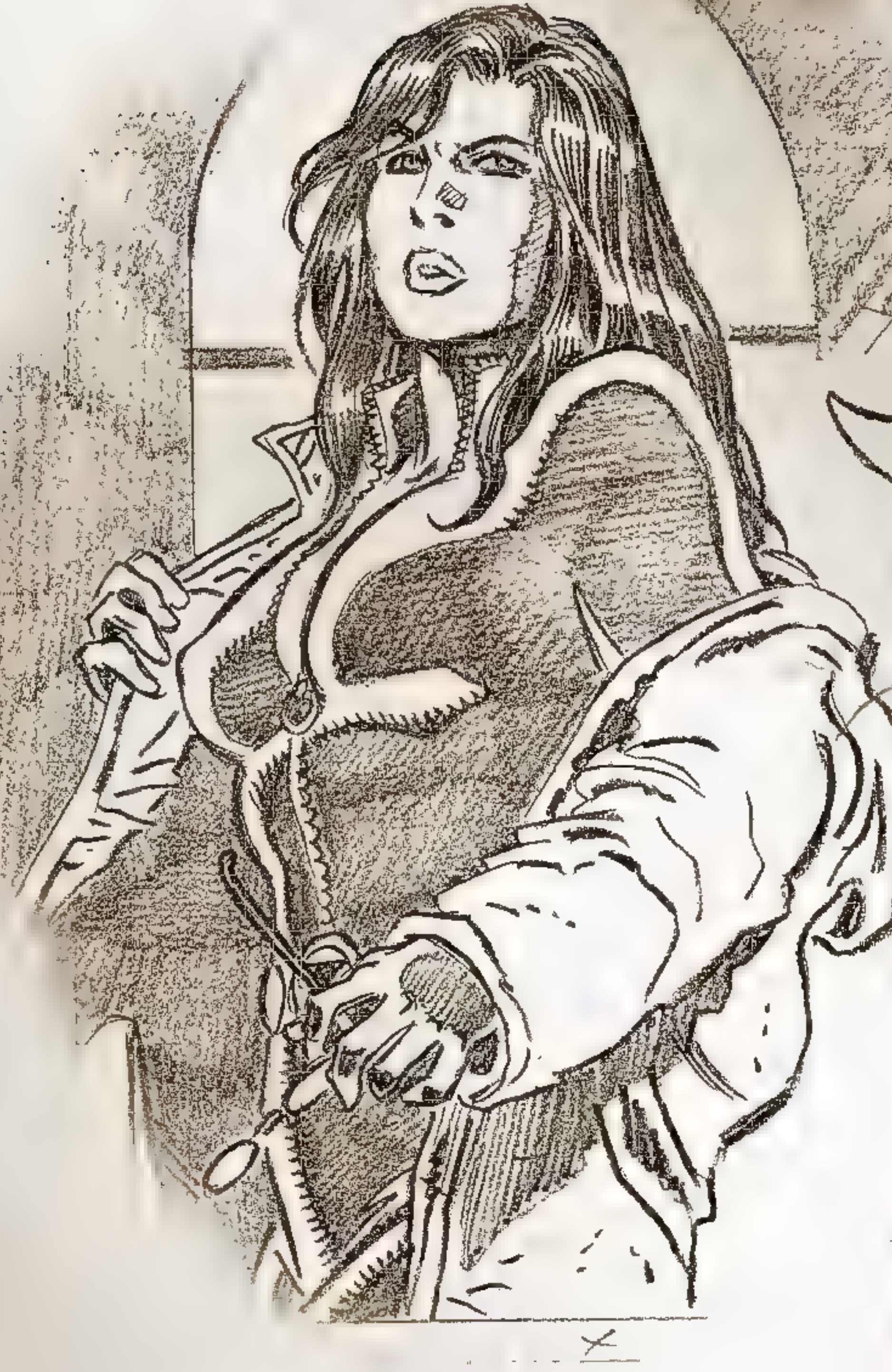


## Eduardo Barreto

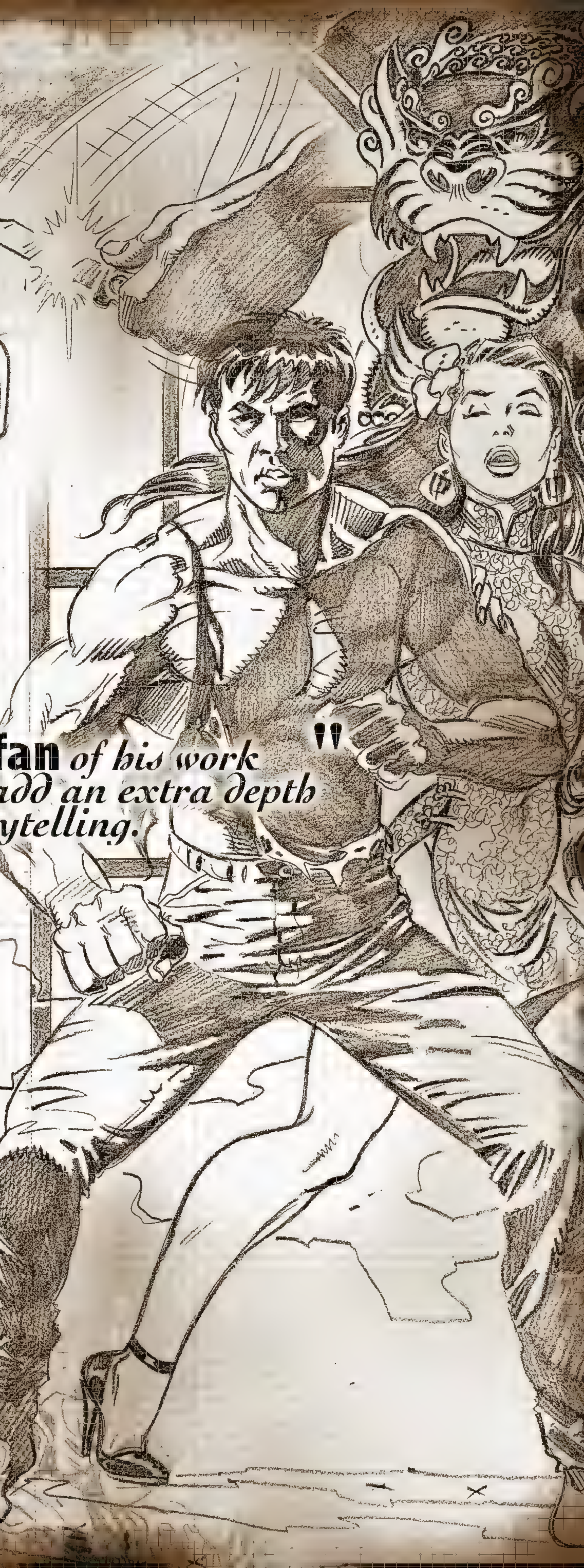


"**Joe Quesada** asked for a dark **and** grim urban look, so I'm very happy to have **Klaus Janson** on the inks."

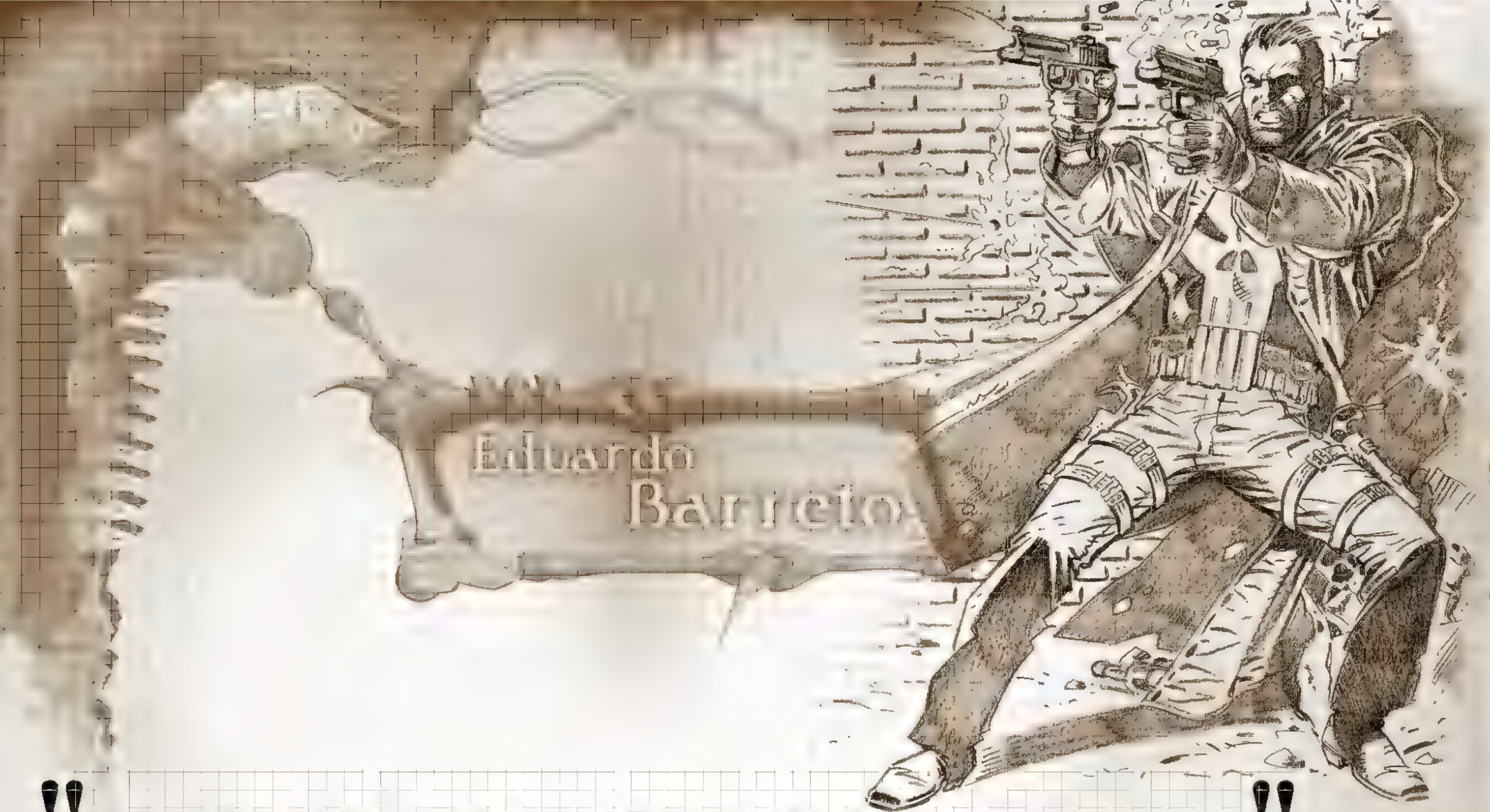




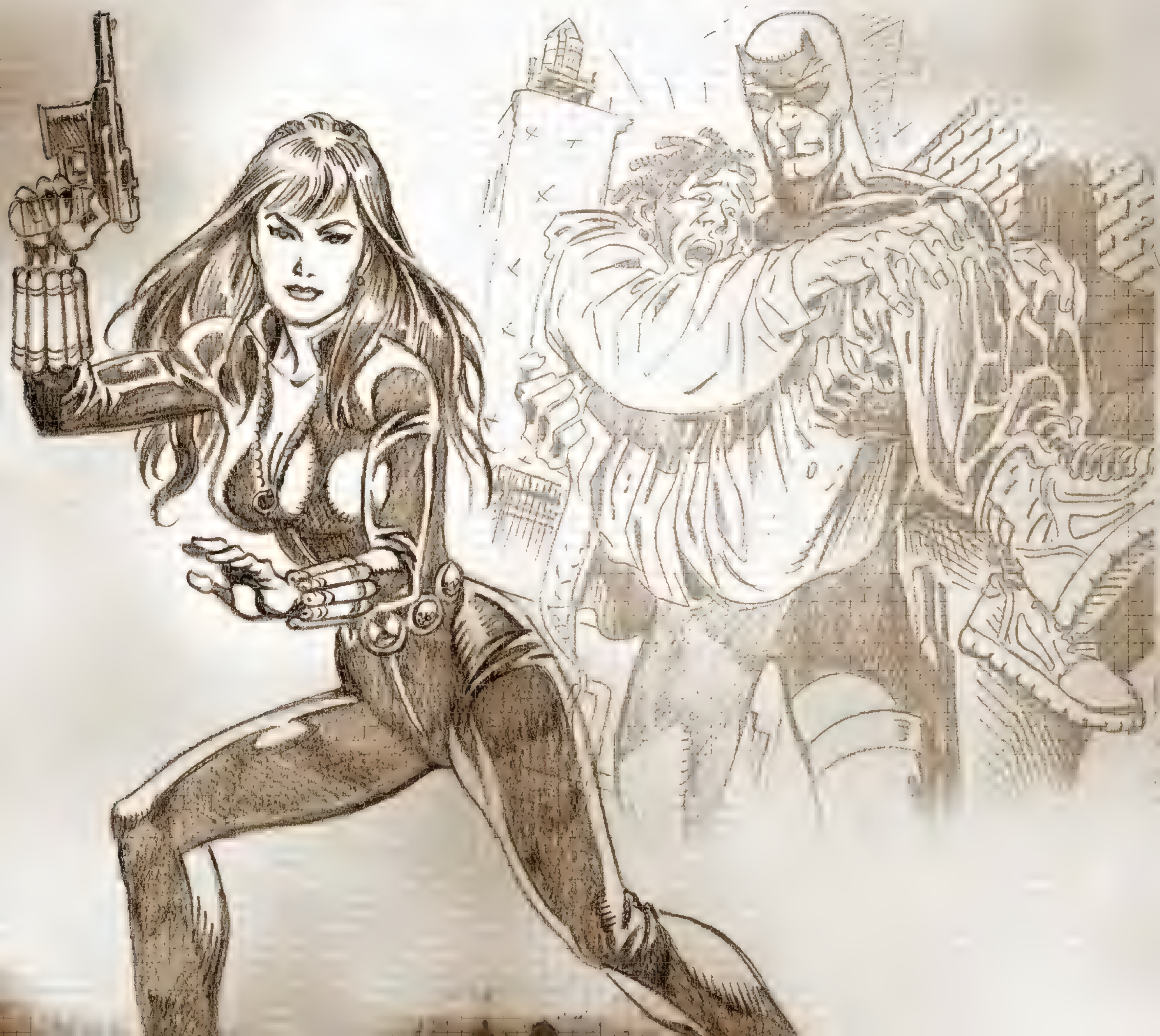
"*I've always been a* **fan** *of his work & I'm sure he'll add an extra depth to the storytelling.*"



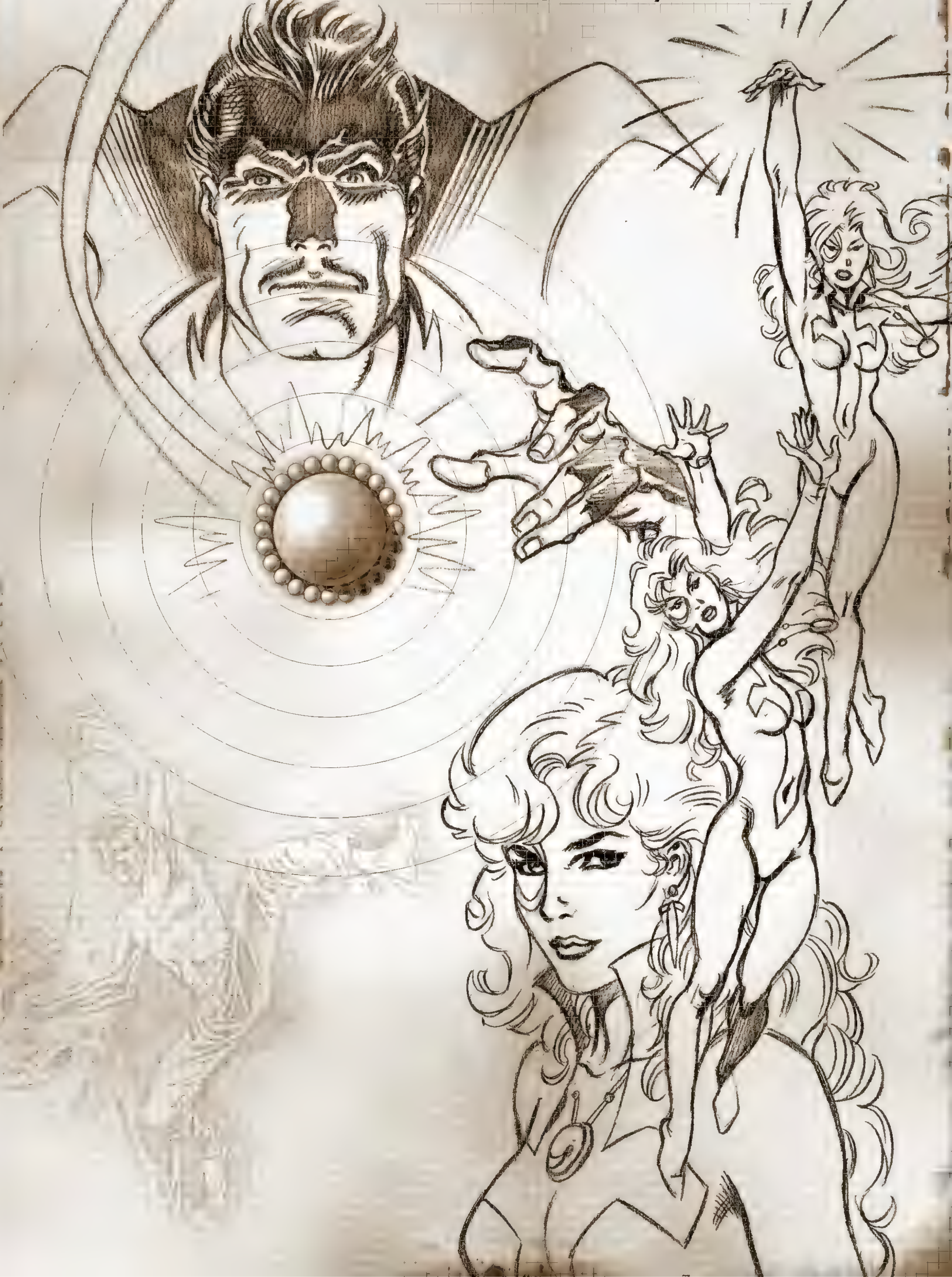
## Eduardo Barreto



"**Daredevil**, **Punisher** and **Black Widow** are the heavyweights.
*I will continue portraying them in a classical way*
They are **tough** characters to improve upon."



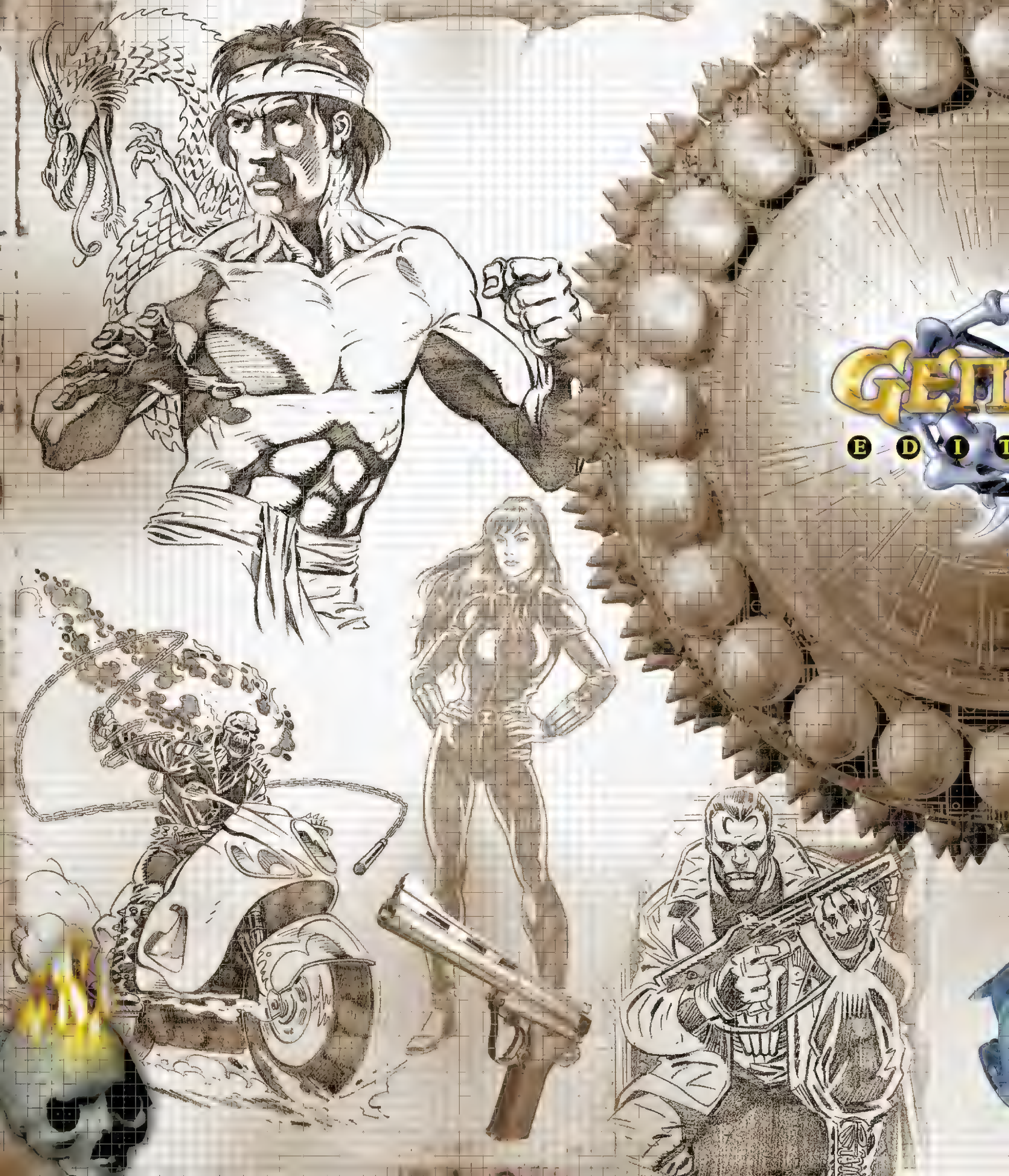
"*The others —*
**Shang-Chi, Dagger, Ghost Rider & Dr. Strange**
*are characters that allow me*
*some room for* ***interpretation***"



"*The main reason I like to work on* ***monthly*** *books is to be able to* ***grow*** *and* **evolve**"

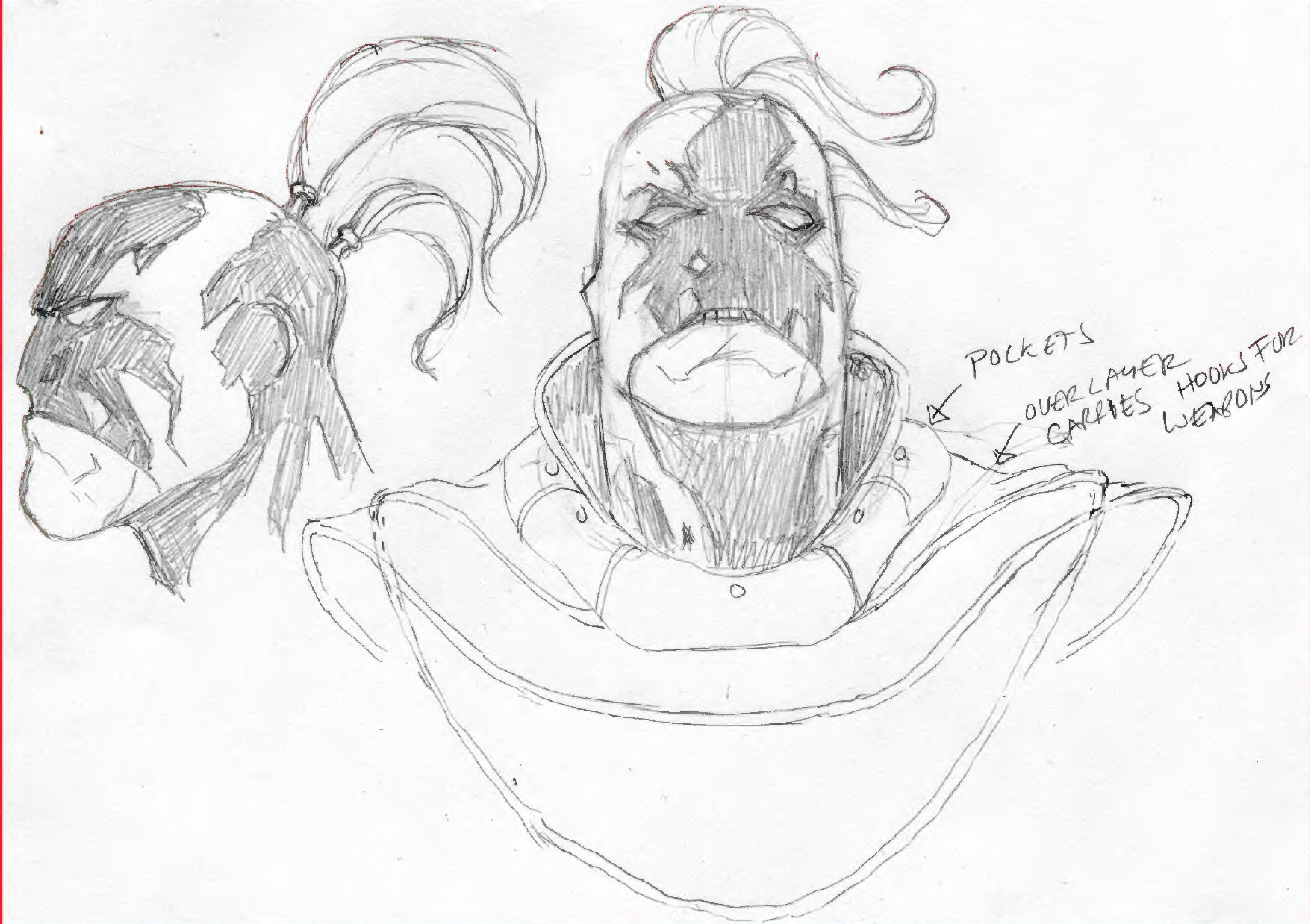
"The way I draw a character at the beginning of a run is not necessarily how that character will always look. **I'm sure the characters will look very different in a few months**"

Eduardo Barreto



ZARAN
QUESADA 5-1-2000
ASSORTMENT OF BLADES & WEAPONS IN FAN CONFIGURATION
COLLAR POCKETS
FOLDING KENDO STAFF
ASSORTMENT OF SLIVER BLADES
HOOK SWORDS
KNIVES
HIPGUARD HAS POCKETS FOR THROWING KNIVE
WEIGHTED CHAIN

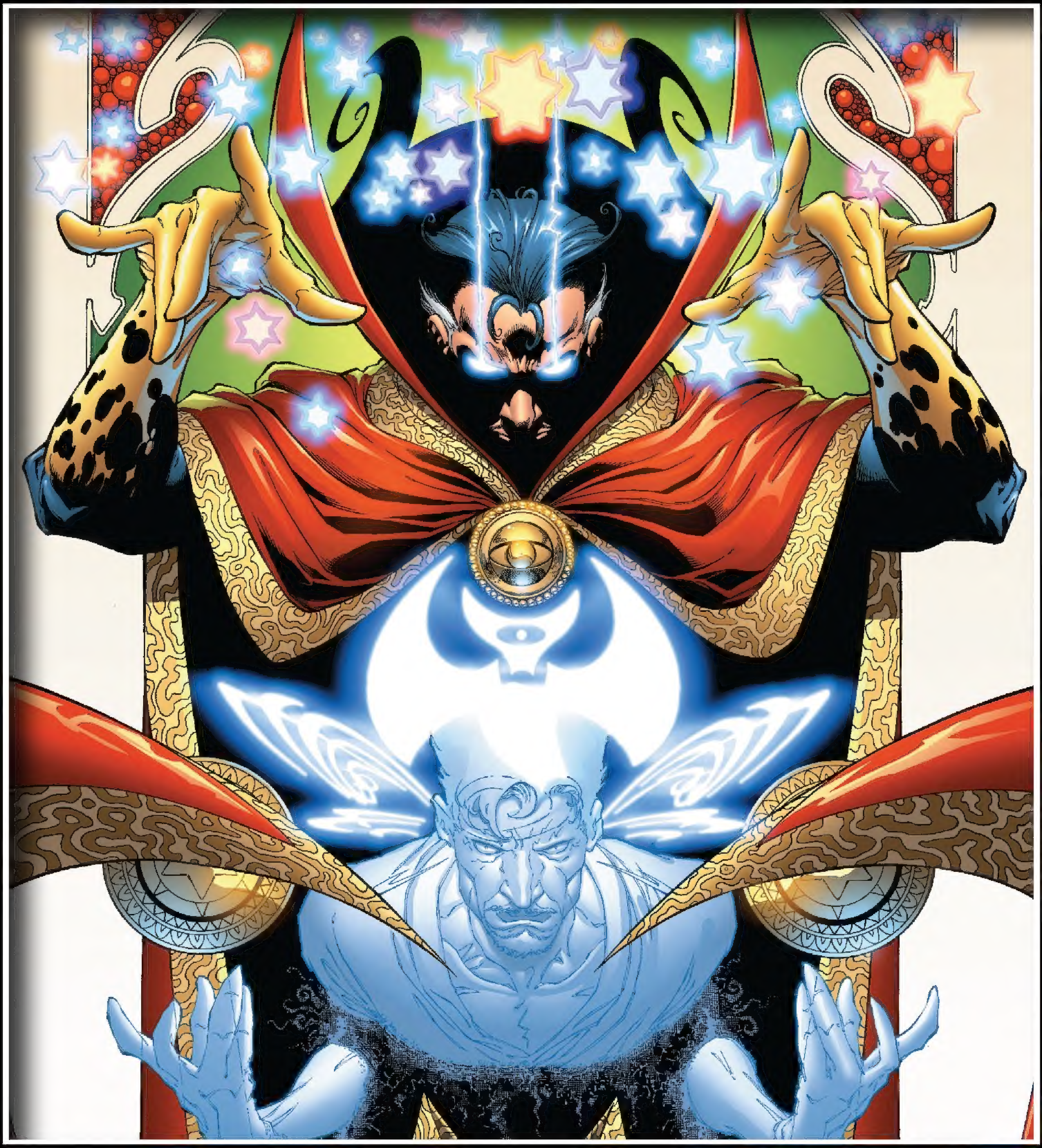
**JOE QUESADA**
Zaran character design



POCKETS
OVERLAYER CARRIES HOOKS FOR WEAPONS

**JOE QUESADA**
Zaran head sketches

# DAREDEVIL! BLACK WIDOW! DAGGER! SHANG-CHI! AND…THE PUNISHER?!



What terrible evil could unite these vigilantes on a single mission? Would you believe…Ulik the Troll?! As Daredevil leads them deep underground in search of answers, is Ulik really the priority — or is it taking down the Punisher? How about helping Dagger's troubled partner, Cloak? Could it be Zaran the Weapons Master, who's leaving a trail of bodies in his wake? Or maybe it's the ancient menace for whom Zaran is working! Whatever the biggest problem faced by this vigilante team, only Moon Knight would be crazy enough to want in! Doctor Strange makes a house call as the group faces a nightmarish enemy, while Widow takes Dagger under her wing. All this plus Nick Fury, Luke Cage and the final face-off between the Punisher and Daredevil!

**Marvel Knights**
(2000) #1–15

T+

ZONE